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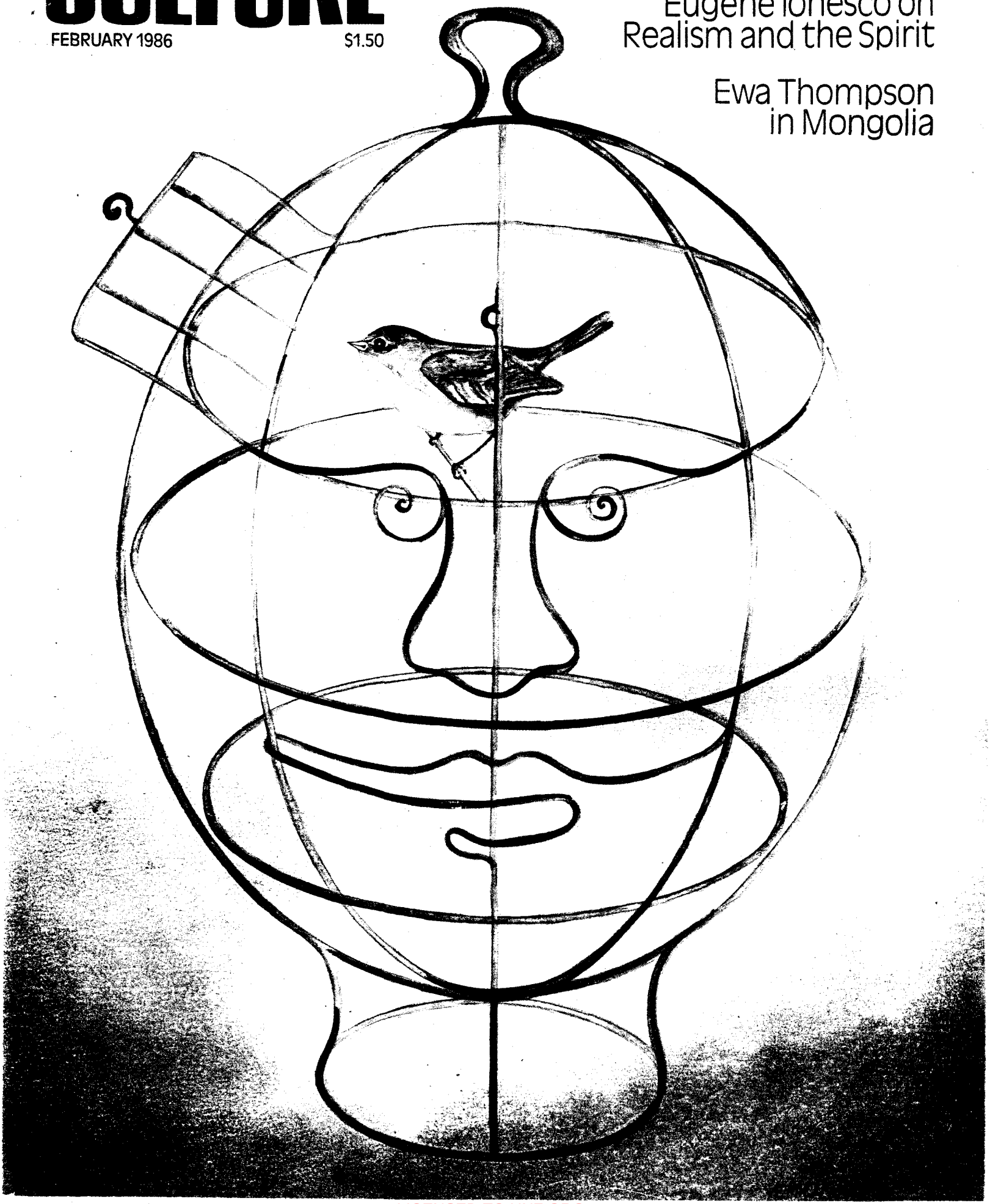

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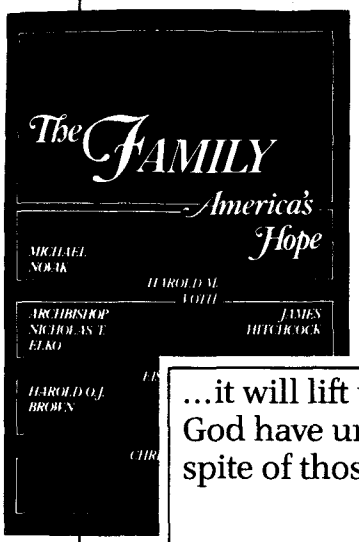

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Andrei Navrozov, editor of *The Yale Literary Magazine* and a contributing editor for *Harper's*, joins *Chronicles of Culture* this month as our poetry editor. His primary effort with *Chronicles* will be in soliciting the verse of distinguished European poets, with the first fruits of his work appearing elsewhere in this issue (see "A Victorian Honeymoon" by Vernon Scannell on page 15). Below, Mr. Navrozov reflects upon the passing of one of Britain's leading poets:

When Philip Larkin died on December 2, 1985, at age 63, the news appeared on the obituaries page of the next day's *New York Times*, just above the mass grave of the previous day's deaths. Still, the 12-paragraph item did justice to Larkin in describing him as "one of Britain's best-loved poets."

There is little doubt that a hundred years from now literary historians will consider Philip Larkin much less of an anomaly, which is how today's observers of the "poetry scene" must perceive him. Obituaries page or not, Larkin was famous, in America as well as in Britain; front page or not, Larkin was a good poet. The overlapping of these two qualities is so rare in our time that the life and death of the man visited by such rare good fortune takes on a significance beyond any objective evaluations of his literary achievement.

That our time is a good time for poetry and a bad time for poets is a truism. Philip Larkin's contemporaries, older and younger, still writing in England today, include Charles Causley, Roy Fuller, John Heath-Stubbs, Geoffrey Hill, Vernon Scannell, Laurie Lee, and dozens of others whose achievement may, in the end, equal or surpass Larkin's; yet how many in America, or for that matter even in England, can locate these names on the map of literary celebrity? And if one asks about the younger generation, poets like P.J. Kavanagh are probably not even in the *Times*' obituary files. It is also true that there are several other good poets whose fame approaches Larkin's; but the good luck of Seamus Heaney has more to do with civil unrest in Ireland than with his verse, while Joseph Brodsky would probably have died in obscurity by now had it not been for the lucky break of his scandalous exile from Soviet Russia. The amazing good fortune of Philip Larkin was that he achieved his fame working as a librarian and living as one.

In 1975, in the summer of my freshman year at Yale, I came across a Larkin poem in a bookshop. "The trees are coming into leaf," it began, "Like something almost being said." When, six lines and an hour later, I reached the end—

> Yet still the unresting castles thresh
> In fullgrown thickness every May.
> Last year is dead, they seem to say,
> Being afresh, afresh, afresh.

—I felt the kind of numbness one experiences on being told some very, very good and very, very important news.

Poetry's advantage over life is that its news stays news, in Pound's phrase, and Philip Larkin has been my news source ever since. In time, I discovered that he had been known to others for years; but when I began reading his peers and asking about them, I began to perceive the enormous injustice of the situation: his was the only name people knew. But, I reasoned, at least they knew Larkin!

Asked why I decided to buy *The Yale Literary Magazine*, then bankrupt, I would always answer that my ambition in life was to find the poet born to translate Rilke into English and publish him. As of this writing, my ambition remains unfulfilled, but what I have found since that time are the living wellsprings of contemporary poetry. It was Larkin who led me to them; he was the visible key to an invisible kingdom whose news never reached the *Times*. In gratitude, we opened our first issue with "The Trees"; we were grateful to him for his fame as well as for his genius. Obituary page or front page, both are still alive, and so are the gratitude and the memory. cc

Academic freedom at Stanford—the saga continues. First it was Vice Admiral James Stockdale, recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroic leadership as senior POW officer in Vietnam. He was booted out of Stanford's classrooms last fall, apparently because he was too fond of his country, too hard on communists, and far too popular with students to please the faculty. Now Steven Mosher, a doctoral candidate in anthropology, has been finally dismissed from the university and denied his degree. Mosher's doctoral research had exposed how Chinese communists have forced tens of thousands of women to submit to compulsory abortion and have fostered the practice of infanticide. Not surprisingly, the academic revolutionaries at Stanford were not happy with his findings.

First Mosher was dismissed by the anthropology department for "behavior inappropriate for an anthropologist." (After revelations about Margaret Mead's research methods and sex life, it's hard to know what inappropriate means in this context.) When the dismissal was appealed, Stanford President Donald Kennedy upheld the decision in a 35-page letter focusing on the ways in which Mosher had allegedly eroded "the necessary relationship between faculty and student." Kennedy admitted the flimsy grounds of some of the original accusations against Mosher, which were based on statements by his alienated former wife. But Kennedy alleged that

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Mosher had given "conflicting stories" to some faculty members about some details of his research—the intended research use of a van, the number of documents collected, and the date of a camera purchase. (The Stanford administration apparently regards the suspect camera purchase as central to the case and has gone so far as to hire a Hong Kong detective agency and a handwriting expert to investigate the purchase receipt for the Nikon FE—or was it really a Nikon F2?) Kennedy also found it unacceptable that Mosher submitted a shocking exposé of infanticide and compulsory abortion when his "advisors were expecting to receive a demographic comparison between a fishing village and a farming community in Taiwan." It seems that at Stanford, graduate students are not supposed to redirect their dissertations to "entirely different subject matter without so much as a by-your-leave," even if Mosher had arranged for a new dissertation committee.

To be fair, Stanford's is not the only anthro department in which students know the results of their research before they ever start. And it is true that Stanford *had* received a letter from the Chinese government warning that Chinese-American relations would be strained if Mosher were not dismissed. Kennedy *did* complain about the impropriety of a Stanford student traveling about in China "without such permission being specified in writing on his travel permit," since an exchange student has an "obligation to protect the reputation of the program" by not "testing the limits of the Chinese security system." Still, the Stanford president insisted that political considerations had nothing to do with the Mosher dismissal—and at least three aging alumni and two entering freshmen believed him.

The *Wall Street Journal* was not impressed, however. *WSJ* editors saw nothing in Stanford's "procedural fastidiousness" to erase "the strong impression that had Mr. Mosher been a tenured university anthropologist rather than an Indiana Jones, the world would never have learned of the horrors he had discovered in Guangdong Province. . . . [T]his is by no means the only recent instance of faculty and administrators flushing from their midst colleagues or visitors they deem intellectually, politically, or personally uncongenial. We worry about a more general intolerance on the part of what seems to be an increasingly enervated class of U.S. university intellectuals."

But wait—there's good news from Stanford. According to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, the Stanford Law School has just announced that any organization that discriminates against homosexuals will no longer be allowed to recruit on campus. At least they are consistent. In protecting the rights of the People's Republic and the homophiles, Stanford displays a typically academic hostility both to freedom and to the reproduction of human life. cc

Children's rights have taken an unexpected turn in Sweden. In a move designed, as some observers put it, to "make Sweden the cradle of democracy," the Swedish Pediatric Association recently proposed that all Swedish in-

fants be granted the right to vote at birth, a right to be exercised by parents until the child is 18. According to Reuters, Swedish pediatricians are "worried that society takes insufficient care of families with children" and feels that the government must find "ways of giving children and parents more political influence." Claes Sundelin, chairman of the Swedish Pediatric Association, believes that the interests of children are slighted in comparison with those of retirees and workers: "The most important reason why society pays so little attention to children is quite simply that it is not especially profitable politically." To say the least: Sweden's birthrate now stands at less than 60 percent of replacement level.

This is one Swedish idea the United States ought to consider. (Goodness knows, we've been picking up all their other zany suggestions.) As it is now, we have a tax system with a scandalously low personal exemption for dependents and a built-in penalty for families who take care of their own children. We also suffer under a social security system that places the well-being of an increasing number of retirees on the backs of a declining number of young workers. It is hardly surprising that were it not for immigration (much of it illegal), the American population would already be stagnant or declining. In many areas, one of the hottest issues in local politics is the closing of schools. Unless we want to become—like Sweden—a land of swinging geriatrics, it may be time to reenfranchise families.

A head-count of our colleagues, by the way, revealed an average of 3.5 children per family (and some are still in the running). Since literacy is no longer a requirement, we could even let the children pull the lever. They say random selection in the stock market outperforms the experts. In politics, it couldn't hurt. cc

Socialists plan to boycott games—not just in Seoul but in Peoria and Springfield, Illinois, as well. Here in the Prairie State, it seems that some leaders of the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) believe that public schooling offers the only legitimate variety of education. In an effort to keep their students undefiled by contact with the elitists enrolled in parochial and private schools, the Interstate Eight Conference has called for the expulsion of private schools from all of the state's championship tournaments. Citing "basic philosophical differences concerning the education process itself between public and nonpublic schools," the conference is looking for some "more equitable system" to overcome the "feeling of unfairness" pervading current competition. Many observers believe that this "feeling of unfairness" is nothing more than embarrassment over the record compiled by public schools in competition with private ones. Private schools constitute

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BETWEEN THE LINES *by Thomas Fleming*

"He whom nature has made weak and idleness keeps ignorant may yet support his vanity by the name of a critic."

—Samuel Johnson

Not too long ago we devoted an issue to the death of serious art. While there may be many objections to the thesis that popular culture has replaced painting, the symphony, and the drama, there is no doubt that the estate of poetry is as low as it has ever been in the long history of our civilization. The decadence of poetry is a more serious affair than similar developments in music, painting, and sculpture. Of all high arts, poetry best expresses the character of a civilization. Heroic poetry embodies the living history and traditions of a people, while other genres like tragedy and satire provide the most powerful weapons for attacking pressing problems of politics and social ethics. Unlike philosophy or science, which can have a direct influence only on a tiny minority, poetry is a part of everyone's life from the time we first hear "Little Boy Blue."

These sentiments are hardly novel. They were not even original with Matthew Arnold, who did so much to give them currency. In his own lifetime, Arnold had witnessed the moral collapse of Christianity in England and the rise of a scientific world view that threatened to undermine all systems of value. Against both these forces, old and new, Arnold put his faith in culture, specifically poetry:

> More and more mankind will discover that we have to turn to poetry to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us. Without poetry, our science will appear incomplete; and most of what now passes for religion and philosophy will be replaced by poetry.
>
> —"The Study of Poetry"

It was a noble—albeit blasphemous—answer to a generation that had begun to doubt of everything received. Arnold had strong reservations about even the best poetry of the 19th century, including his own. The problem with nearly all of English verse, he believed, was a lack of discipline. The remedy lay in criticism, whose function is to make us "perpetually dissatisfied with these works, while they perpetually fall short of a high and perfect ideal." The Victorians did not, he insisted, live in anything like a Golden Age—"the promised land, towards which criticism can only beckon" ("The Function of Criticism at the Present Time"). Arnold clearly saw himself as a Moses able to lead his people out of the desert but unable himself to pass over Jordan.

It is hard to avoid the feeling that a great deal of modern literary history, in England and the U.S., has been a series of efforts to fulfill (or refute) Arnold's magisterial pronouncements. While A.E. Housman thought the critic was the rarest thing on God's green earth, criticism has, in fact, become the occupation of thousands of English professors and literary interpreters, whose published works would more than fill the shelves of a decent-sized college library. Apart from the more obviously prominent journals like the *PMLA* and distinguished period journals like *Victorian Studies*, there are literally thousands of publications devoted to every imaginable author and period and edited from nearly every conceivable perspective. For a young assistant professor, it must be glorious: How could he fail to place at least two articles a year? Who will read them is another matter.

And yet, for all this activity and busyness since Arnold's time, there is rather clear evidence that poetry does *not* play the role he had imagined for it. So far from replacing religion, the faith endures—at least in the more backward sections of the U.S.—while the influence of the sciences has continued to wax strong, and not just in the academy. Now, during this period, we have witnessed the rise and fall of New Criticism (and much new poetry), the projectivist theories of Charles Olson and his friends, Freudian interpretations—especially as mystified by the French—sociological criticism, and currently the antics of professors who are paid to go about the world "deconstructing" everything except their own inflated prose.

The older generation of critics is understandably disturbed by literary hooligans who make smug pronouncements on texts and subtexts and airily dismiss all considerations of genre and tradition while at the same time destroying the distinction between writing and reading. In principle, "deconstruction" is an attack on the professional privileges of critics and professors: if every interpretation is valid, if every reading constitutes a "text," what do we need critics and teachers for? In practice, however, it doesn't work that way. As Michel de Certeau points out:

> By its very nature available to a plural reading, the text becomes a cultural weapon, a private hunting reserve, the pretext for a law that legitimizes as "literal" the interpretation given by socially

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> authorized professionals and intellectuals. . . . If the reader's expression of his freedom through the text is tolerated among intellectuals (*Clercs*) (only someone like Barthes can take this liberty), it is on the other hand denied students (who are scornfully driven or cleverly "coaxed" back to the meaning "accepted" by their teachers) or the public (who are carefully told "what is to be thought").

In this respect, deconstructionists are a great deal like those Marxist revolutionaries who monopolize all power *in the name of* the people. To this extent they are simply behaving like other critics. But on the other hand, for all their foolishness and the subliterate slang they prefer to English and French, they have a point: the main function of criticism in the 20th century has been to establish a clerical elite authorized to tell us what literature really means. Whatever their political views, most critics have functioned as cultural conservatives.

This comes out clearly in the case of F.R. Leavis, who viewed himself as part of that tiny minority on whom "the discerning appreciation of art and literature depends." In several respects, Leavis was a reactionary: he hated machines, mass culture, and the pretensions of American upstarts like Max Eastman. But he was not alone in viewing critics as a literary aristocracy charged with preserving the best of the past and browbeating the mob into submission. Many of the American New Critics—John Crowe Ransom, Cleanth Brooks, and Allen Tate—held similar views about 20th-century civilization.

But faith in tradition cannot be translated directly into social influence. T.S. Eliot was, after all, the most influential poet and critic of the years before the Second World War, but Eliot tended to influence individuals, not groups. He went so far as to express aversion to the idea that his works should be required reading in schools. For all his ponderings of literary questions, Eliot never worked out a *system*—a flaw which was detected and held against him by the New Critics who came to prominence in the 30's. In fact, there is a great difference between the kind of critical writing practiced by Eliot and the sort that has been espoused by full-time critics (Eliot was kept busy as poet, dramatist, and businessman). While most modern critics have attempted to elevate their art up to (and sometimes beyond) the level of poetry and fiction, the author of *The Waste Land* was more concerned to defend the honor of his craft.

Eliot at first maintained a very restricted view of criticism as mere comment and exposition, but in later years he came to appreciate and practice the larger and more liberal speculation of Arnold. What he did not give up was the conviction that unlike poetry, criticism was not an "autotelic activity," i.e., an end in itself. For a time he was tempted to believe that only poets had any business setting up for critics and never gave up the idea that "the criticism employed by a trained and skilled writer on his own work is the most vital, the highest criticism." As for interpreting texts—the main business of most contemporary critics—he considered it legitimate only "when it is not interpretation at all, but merely putting the reader in possession of facts which he would otherwise have missed." But facts do not ordinarily come within the provenance of criticism—much less New Criticism, which relegates most facts to one or another of its favorite "fallacies." It is scholarship which Eliot praises, good old-fashioned philological pedantry. He exclaims with some asperity that "any book, any essay, any note in *Notes and Queries* which produces a fact of even the lowest order about a work of art is a better piece of work than nine-tenths of the most pretentious critical journalism, in journals or in books."

When Eliot made these observations in "The Function of Criticism" (1923), the literary world was on the brink of a revolution in critical methods inaugurated largely by I.A. Richards. What Richards and the other New Critics brought was not so much new ideas about the nature of literature or even of the function of criticism (although they were infused with an unholy zeal for their discipline). What made them revolutionaries was the very practice which Eliot had denigrated: interpretation. Richards called it "practical criticism," and he introduced his method of studying texts—stripped of all context including authorship—into the instruction and examinations at Cambridge, whence it has made its way to nearly every English department in the world. In his book *Practical Criticism* (1929), Richards announced the birth of a "new technique for those who wish to discover for themselves what they think and feel about poetry . . . and why they should like or dislike it."

Properly read, Richards' announcement can be viewed as the program for much of the criticism produced in the following 50 years. It is important to notice both the subjective, emotional element ("what they think and feel") and the authoritarian ("why they should like it"), because it is this special combination of unverifiable intuition and academic orthodoxy which gives literary interpretation its special character.

For Richards, the interpretive key was psychology, and he insisted that the critics' first job was to arrive at "the mental condition relevant to the poem." In practical terms, it has proved impossible to determine exactly what that condition was. Is it the poet's mental condition? Hardly, for that would involve what the New Critics learned to call the intentional fallacy. If critics disagreed over an interpretation, the question would have to be settled (presumably) by the one more adept at entering the appropriate literary trance. Most critics would respond to the dilemma with something like this: the validity of interpretations depends on the degree to which they are confirmed by the text. (But, as the deconstructionists are apt to point out, what exactly do you mean by text?) Many articles seem to be written from indexes and concordances and attempt to show significant patterns of image, symbol, or theme. Can we judge such performances by the number of words and lines they are able to explicate? The very fact that there is such a wild variety of interpretations of significant works must call into question the idea that literary analysis has an objective basis.

This does not mean, it goes without saying, that interpretation is an open process—far from it, since it is up to the duly licensed critics to decide which sorts of feelings and mental states are actually relevant. Now, if a blockhead in

(continued on p. 28)

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Guns, Butter, and Guilt *by Lee Congdon*

"Guns will make us powerful; butter will only make us fat."

—Hermann Goering

Henry Ashby Turner Jr.: *German Big Business and the Rise of Hitler*; Oxford University Press; New York.

R.J. Overy: *Goering: The "Iron Man"*; Routledge and Kegan Paul; London and Boston.

Kay Heriot: *To The Edge*; The Book Guild; Sussex, England.

It is 40 years now since the Allies claimed victory over Germany and survivors on both sides made the first groping attempts to uncover the meaning of Nazism. Yet despite the availability of almost inexhaustible sources and the persistence of armies of scholars, the effort to locate the Third Reich in the history of Western civilization has not produced results that are altogether satisfying. Studies of the *Hitler-Zeit* would fill libraries, but its inner history continues to resist conventional research strategies. Brought face to face with questions that reach to the very heart of what it means to be human, many have had recourse to psychological examinations, sociological investigations, and literary reinventions.

Perhaps it is because of Nazism's peculiar elusiveness that the door was initially opened to enterprising ideologists who have made it their aim to bend modern German history to their political purposes. In particular, they have been eager to identify Nazism with conservatism and with capitalism. The Frankfurt School theorist Max Horkheimer once gave it as his opinion that it was impossible to speak of fascism without speaking of capitalism. The Third Reich, on such a view, was the logical consequence of a bourgeois capitalist "system" that had reached the end of its tether. In the final analysis, Nazism was to be explained in economic terms as capitalism's desperate and ultimately doomed attempt to compel socialism's forces to retreat. Hitler was merely the agent, conscious or otherwise, of the captains of industry, the executor of a fate that awaits all capitalist states that do not make way for History. This widely circulated myth can be traced back at least as far as *Die Linkskurve*, late Weimar's quixotic Communist journal. For its contributors, as for most members of the prewar left, Hitler was no more dangerous than other tools of "monopoly capitalism," including his predecessors in the Reich's chancellery —Brüning, Papen, and Schleicher.

If anything can undermine faith in that particular myth, it is Henry Ashby Turner's superbly written and impressively argued study. Turner has devoted long years to a close examination of virtually all the relevant sources —including the archives of major German corporations—in a determination to assess without prejudice the role of German big business in Hitler's rise to power. Marshaling his evidence with skill and sound judgment, he has concluded that with the exception of Fritz Thyssen, the leaders of German big business were wary of Hitler and fed very little money into Nazi coffers. This is not particularly surprising when one reviews, as Turner does patiently, Hitler's evasive, contradictory, and untutored economic pronouncements. Not only was the Nazi chieftain innocent of the dismal science, he was largely indifferent, insisting, quite rightly, that politics shaped historical events far more decisively.

Big business leaders were suspicious not only of the Führer, but also of the NSDAP's left wing and its leader, Gregor Strasser. Strasser and other Party members, including Joseph Goebbels and many Reichstag deputies, were outspoken critics of capitalism and often adopted positions on issues like the eight-hour workday and the right to strike that were disconcertingly similar to those championed by the socialists and communists. To be sure, Hitler always saw to it that big business was placated whenever the voice of socioeconomic radicalism threatened to drown out that of anti-Marxism. Yet to this day, it remains something of a mystery why, in view of the Nazis' forked tongue, industrial leaders played the "longest guessing game" about the Party's economic program for so long. By 1932, when they finally tired of waiting and lent their enthusiastic support to Franz von Papen, a man too clever by half, the die was already cast.

Although Turner does not claim to have made a comprehensive study of lesser businessmen, the evidence he presents suggests that they were far more susceptible than big businessmen to Nazi propaganda. Their enterprises were, after all, in greater and more immediate peril. And unlike big businessmen, they had a weakness for anti-Semitism. Still, during the Great Depression they were not in a position to provide the *Bewegung* with substantial sums of money. Nor did they possess anything like the kind of political influence that would have been required to pave Hitler's way to power. In this, they were no different from big businessmen who, as Turner emphasizes, were never able to translate economic power into political clout. In an age of universal suffrage, votes always count for more than money, a homely truth that our demagogues and self-styled "investigative reporters" have yet to discover.

Lee Congdon is author of The Young Lukács *(University of North Carolina Press).*

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But if big businessmen did not bankroll Hitler, who did? Turner's answer is as simple as it is unsensational: the Nazis raised most of the money themselves by charging admission to their mass rallies and by insisting upon prompt payment of Party dues. Volunteer labor and contributions in kind constituted further, if indirect, sources of income. Turner supports this conclusion with evidence that is detailed and convincing, but he harbors no illusions about its chances of winning acceptance in academic circles. "Some," he writes "will dismiss [his book] as an apology for capitalism and its author as a lackey of powerful vested economic interests." And although he does not say so, some will undoubtedly seek to discredit him because of the scandal that has recently rocked the American historical profession.

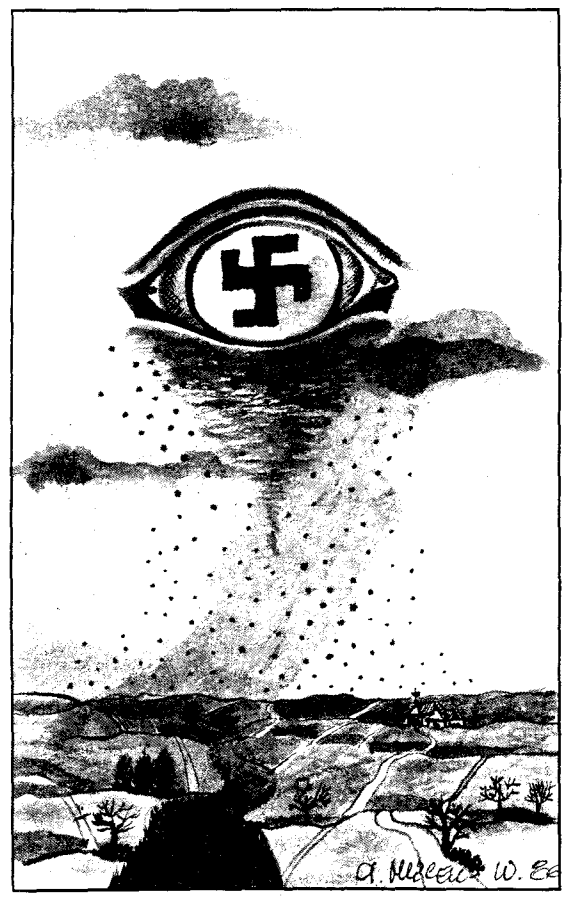
It was Turner who first accused Princeton historian David Abraham of having "subjected documents to systematically tendentious misconstrual" in an effort to update the Marxist interpretation of the putative Hitler-big business nexus. Despite a weak and unpersuasive rebuttal, Abraham continues to receive a good bit of emotional support from the academic left. And not without reason, for he is far from being the only historian who tailors evidence to fit preconceived theories and political enthusiasms. In the pages of the generally trendy *New York Review of Books*, Theodore Draper has only recently dissected the willful misrepresentation of the history of American communism by former New Leftists who "had to decide what to do with themselves and their political sympathies once the New Left illusion was taken away from them."

Beleaguered as Turner has been for having caught one radical historian *flagrante delicto*, he will be heartened by R.J. Overy's valuable study of the Nazi leader whom W.D. Snodgrass has knowingly characterized in verse ("Reichsmarschall Hermann Goering") as a man of many masks and no face. Overy would agree, for despite its title, his book is in essence an examination of Nazi economic policy from 1937 to 1942, years during which Goering was at the zenith of his power and influence. According to this capable British historian, Goering's career is the story of his efforts to subject the German economy to Nazi control. Neither he nor his minions had any use for private enterprise, because they were determined to mobilize the entire economy for war. As director of the Four Year Plan and the mammoth Reichswerke Hermann Goering, Goering first extended Party control over the domestic economy; subsequently, he sought to "coordinate" economically the expanding Nazi Empire.

"We did not fight this war," Goering once said, "for the sake of private economic interests." To be sure, some capitalists did realize profits during the Nazi years, but their success was incidental and purchased at great personal price. In due course, for example, all of the directors of the giant chemical concern I.G. Farben had to become Party members. Fritz Thyssen, that tireless proponent of Nazism, soon found it advisable to flee Germany, even at the cost of forfeiting his considerable industrial holdings. Far from exercising or sharing power in Hitler's New Order, capitalists quickly discovered that they could expect nothing but expropriation or close supervision by the Nazi elite.

Indeed, this deeply ingrained hostility to capitalism constituted a major problem for Goering. His knowledge of economics, like that of Hitler, was limited and muddled. Added to that, he had initially been advised to plan for war sometime during the mid-1940's—when, to Hitler's surprise, the British and French declared war over the invasion of Poland in 1939, the German economy was not yet ready. Nor, as a consequence, were the armed forces, including Goering's much ballyhooed *Luftwaffe*. Still, Overy maintains that all would not have been lost had the "Iron Man" possessed the wit to do what was clearly indicated: rationalize production. His failure resulted in part from an unshakable conviction, formed during his service in World War I, that the personal heroism of those engaged in combat was far more essential to victory than support services and production. To make matters worse, he shared the disdain of German designers and military authorities for capitalist mass production. Incredibly enough, the war was almost over before the Germans began to manufacture standardized parts. Overy reports that "the Ju 88 bomber was designed with 4,000 different types of screw and bolt and had to be riveted by hand." By the time the more farsighted Albert Speer became head of wartime construction in 1942, it was already too late.

All of this is by way of demonstrating how far removed Nazism was from capitalism and from conservatism. Indeed, Overy makes it clear throughout that it was a revolutionary movement "whose sympathies with the conservatives were transparently tactical and whose heritage was 1848 rather than 1866." The latter part of the argument is by no means new; the distinguished Polish-born historian, Sir Lewis Namier, advanced it first in his overheated Raleigh Lecture of 1944—*1848: The Revolution of the Intellectuals*. Nor is it very convincing. Overy is on



far more solid ground when he calls attention to the Nazis' kinship with the Bolsheviks, not only in the Party's control of administrative and economic life, but also in a shared enthusiasm for a "restless dialectic of violence"

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that had as its purpose the dissolution of all the old social and political bonds. (Here he follows rather closely Hermann Rauschning's still unrivaled analysis in *The Revolution of Nihilism*.)

Kay Heriot subscribes to the Rauschning/Overy view of Nazism as a revolutionary movement that had nothing whatever in common with the conservatism of which she is an impassioned defender. In her judgment, Nazism was the nihilistic consequence of a long chain of events set in motion by the Committee of Public Safety's Reign of Terror. It was by its very nature the implacable foe of all those who cherished the moral and aesthetic traditions of the West. That, finally, is the burden of her new novel, although one might also read it as an extended and moving meditation on friendship.

The scene is Germany in the late 1930's. In their determination to discredit an uncooperative aristocratic family, the Nazis spread a slanderous rumor to the effect that the family's only son and his best friend are homosexual "lovers." The terrible suffering that this calumny produces constitutes the symbol and measure of the regime's radical evil. Although Heriot sometimes gives in to sentimentality, she offers numerous insights and worthy judgments concerning a wide range of topics, moral and aesthetic. Above all else, though, she is concerned to hold up the young friends as representatives of the "Other Germany," that of Goethe and Schiller, of Bach and Beethoven, and of those conservative heroes and martyrs who resisted and finally attempted to kill Hitler on 20 July 1944—Stauffenberg, Moltke, Trott zu Solz, and the gifted Lutheran pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer. It is to their memory that this German-born writer has dedicated her book. No wonder, then, that one of her protagonists joins the resistance and falls victim to Hitler's sadistic revenge. By their suffering and sacrifice, Heriot wants us to understand, he and those like him redeemed Germany. We are reminded of the question that Abraham put to God concerning Sodom: "Peradventure ten [righteous men] shall be found there?" And God said, "I will not destroy it for ten's sake."

But if it is true that the suffering of some can redeem the sin of the many, is it not also true that the sin of some is the burden of all? Heriot's novel is fascinating not least because it raises anew a particularly complex and awesome question—that of corporate guilt. "You feel responsible," one of the friends says. "What is happening here is our tragedy, and ultimately our guilt." That this conviction of collective responsibility is deeply experienced, we are not left in any doubt. But why should this be so? It seems, after all, to contradict the tradition of Western individualism that owes so much to the Protestant spirit.

However problematic the issue remains, it continues to haunt the pages of almost every study of Nazi Germany. Although, as we have seen, Turner defends the men of German big business against the false charges that have been leveled at them, he does not exonerate them of all responsibility. Most, he observes, "viewed Nazism myopically and opportunistically." Concerned with little beyond narrow self-interest, "most failed to perceive the threat [the NSDAP] posed to the very foundations of civilized life." In this, they differed little from most members of the country's elite. For his part, Overy is reluctant to point an accusing finger at Germans who were not Nazis, but he cannot and does not disguise their sometimes shocking complicity.

That being said, the question remains: Do *all* Germans share somehow in the Nazi guilt? The answer, I believe, must be a properly qualified yes, for our destiny—indeed our very being—is inextricably intertwined with that of others: family, countrymen, and, in the last analysis, all men. In Adam, all men die, the New Testament teaches us. That does not mean, of course, that every German, much less every human being, must shoulder legal responsibility for Nazi crimes, but it does mean that no one is completely free of the contagion. All of us participate in the sins of our fathers and of our country, just as we share in their achievements and triumphs. If this seems unbearable and unjust, we need only recall St. Paul's comforting words: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Corinthians 15:22). This, perhaps, is one of the Third Reich's deepest meanings. cc

In the forthcoming issue of *Chronicles of Culture*:

Counting the Ways

"The greatest crime the intellectual can be thought guilty of is that of treating the past with respect, of 'romanticizing the past' as convention and cant usually have it. Nostalgia, which is the rust of memory, is permitted because it sells well; but not history. Hence, as everyone knows, the scuttling of curriculum in the schools by undermining the study of history. Never would the NEA 'turn the clock back,' as they love to say."

—from "The Most Unbelievable Thing" by Robert Nisbet

ALSO

John S. Reed tallies the pluses and minuses of polls and surveys

Clyde Wilson discovers a new Tocqueville rediscovering America

Bryce Christensen looks at the beginning of the universe, while Stephen Tanner maps out the end of the world

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Embarrassment of Riches *by Brian Murray*

"Semper inops quicumque cupit"
(Whoever yearns is always poor)

—Claudian

Martin Amis: *Money: A Suicide Note*; Viking; New York; $16.95.

Anita Brookner: *Hotel du Lac*; Pantheon Books; New York; $13.95.

During the 1950's, an increasing number of middle Americans no longer took seriously the principle that honest work carefully performed is its own true reward. As the exhortative Vance Packard and a host of other social critics noted, these Americans defined themselves not by the work they did, but by the number of products they owned and by the way in which they passed their leisure hours. They tended not to worry about either the collapse of the Protestant Ethic or the assorted side effects of self-indulgence; they were, however, deeply concerned that perhaps old Jones next door was working even less and clearing more.

During the prosperous 60's, countless novelists, moviemakers, and rock singers attacked money-grubbing and "conspicuous consumption." But none simultaneously echoed Thomas Carlyle's assertion that "all true work is sacred"; that "one Monster there is in the world—the idle man." In fact, throughout the 60's the opinion makers with the best access to the masses repeatedly indicated that the pursuit of pleasure was unquestionably the central aim of life and that true pleasure was almost always spontaneous, sensual, and "free." The decade's films were particularly full of "uptight" businessmen who finally tell off their tyrannical bosses and, donning blue jeans, head west in quest of the endless wave or the highest high.

The message took hold. Throughout the 70's, those American industries that packaged or promised "fun" tended to prosper even as the rest of the economy struggled and the national debt soared. Marijuana farmers and cocaine salesmen did particularly well, as did the peddlers of what in the 40's and 50's would have been widely and derisively described as smut. By the mid-70's, such explicit publications as *Penthouse* and *Hustler* were openly displayed on newsstands and in convenience stores; films with the most moronic of pornographic themes provoked no mockery and little discussion as they played in full theaters across the nation. Indeed, one of the decade's most successful films, *Emmanuel*, centered on a wealthy young French woman who seeks to relieve her ennui not with a brisk walk or a couple of chocolate truffles, but by flying to Thailand and bedding down with half the population of Bangkok.

During the 70's, money itself made a rousing comeback. After all, as *Emmanuel* proved, money can secure all sorts of thrills and diversions; it also confers considerable prestige—particularly at a time when, thanks to high interest rates and relatively high unemployment, money is scarce. By the early 80's, television's most popular melodramas focused on the maneuverings and indiscretions of assorted sun-belt millionaires, whose hairstyles and wardrobes continue to be extensively publicized and aped. The most widely publicized books promoted what Carlyle had denounced as the "Gospel of Mammonism": they bore titles like *Money Power* and *Aggressive Investing* and waxed ecstatic about T-Bills, CD's, and municipal bonds. Among the most sought-after public speakers were those platitudinarians whose motivational sermons were well-laced with gaudy images of the financial nirvana that awaits us all. Even ex-Yippie Jerry Rubin hit the lecture circuit to assure those "baby-boomers" who had soaked up the pop-Marxist slogans of the 60's that yes, it was now perfectly all right to be rolling in dough.

Martin Amis' fifth novel, *Money*, is set in London and New York City in 1981. Its narrator-protagonist, John Self, informs us early on that his "dream in life" is simply "to make lots of money." Self lives in London but grew up principally in the United States, where he says he acquired "the groundwork for my addictions to junk food, sweet drinks, strong cigarettes, advertising, all-day television—and, perhaps, to pornography and fighting." Now 35, Self cynically directs television commercials for such dubious products as "a new kind of flash-friable pork-and-egg bap or roll or hero called a Hamlette"; he is also vaguely involved in the production of a film, *Good Money*, that is to be aimed at that large and lucrative audience that demands nothing more than limited dialogue and lots of sleaze. Because he is both well-connected and thoroughly vulgar, Self finds that—in his racket at least—"making money is a breeze." He drives a high-priced, gizmo-studded sports car; in London he maintains what he describes without irony as "a kind of playboy pad."

In his constant—automatic—pursuit of sexual gratification, Self frequents massage parlors, hires costly "takeout women" and—in bars—habitually sidles up to women who look drunk or vulnerable enough to tolerate his slurred and clumsy solicitations. Daily he finds time to visit at least one "porno-loop parlour" where even the most twisted of gents can find something to suit their tastes. Here, alone in a darkened cubicle, the jaded Self drops quarters into a video machine that throws up a steady stream of X-rated vignettes, including a few that feature scenes of bestiality and of "chicks getting roughed up."

One of Self's favorite eating spots in London is a Burger Den franchise that moved in where there once operated an Italian restaurant that had "linen tablecloths and rumpy, strict, black-clad waitresses." The passing of this more idiosyncratic eatery does not trouble Self in the least; in fact—as the hawker of the Hamlette—he delights in the seemingly inexorable spread of all the Burger Dens and Burger Hutches and Burger Bowers of the world. "Fast food," he recognizes, "equals fast money."

Self blows considerable cash on

Brian Murray is professor of English at Youngstown State University.

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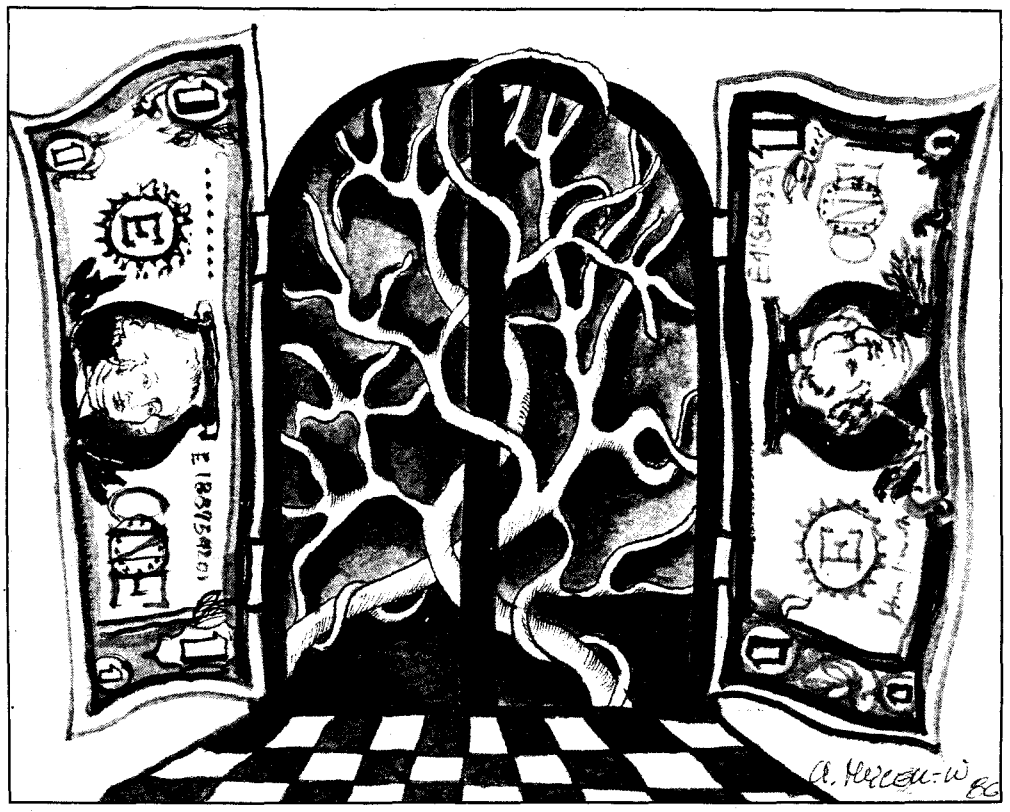
booze. Often he is plastered by mid-afternoon; he concedes that "sleep is an exalted term for what I get up to nowadays. These are blackouts, bub." Like many heavy drinkers and chronic shoppers, Self recognizes that his self-destructive compulsions are symptomatic of a life that is profoundly disordered and—in his case—utterly, pathetically empty and friendless. And like many addicts, Self is much given to periods of intense self-loathing. Repeatedly he calls attention to his enormous gut, his "beady, scaly face"—to his assorted phobias and his absolute lack of self-control. "I wish someone had taught *me* self-discipline," he notes after mentioning that he once heard Prince Charles observe that self-discipline seemed "absolutely essential to any kind of civilized existence." This "someone," Self muses, "could have taught me pride, dignity, and French too, while they [sic] were at it. I wouldn't have had to lift a finger. But no one ever did teach me all that stuff. I've endeavored to teach it to myself. I sit around trying to teach myself self-discipline. I can't be doing with it, though (it just isn't fun, self-discipline), and I always end up going out for a good time instead."



Considerable self-discipline is, of course, also required of anyone who, like Martin Amis, aims to write seriously and well. Some hints in *Money* suggest that Self is partially Amis'—and perhaps every writer's—Mr. Hyde. He is that shiftless, stubborn doppelgänger who most days must be dragged by the hair to the writing table. It is also evident that Amis wants us to recognize that Self is typical of those ubiquitous clods whose minds have been warped not only by pornography, but by the notion—expressed for many years in barracks and locker rooms—that women who are not in one's family can be safely regarded as legitimate objects of prey.

It is more apparent that Amis wants us to see the crass, narcissistic Self as a plausible personification of the age in which he lives; to recognize that—as Self himself puts it—"my way is coming up in the world." Self is a perfect sucker for the shallow images of the good life that movies, magazines, and advertisements incessantly provide; he is a thoroughgoing materialist most comfortable among those who "talk about money in that sharky American style, as if money were the only gauge of anything, the only measure." He has no sense of the past and little interest in the future; he lives—anxiously, neurotically—in what he calls "the panting present." He concedes that he has been "cretinized" by television; that he cannot concentrate long enough to get through Orwell's brief *Animal Farm*—a title, frequently mentioned in *Money*, that aptly describes the carnal, greedy milieu in which Self and his associates root and wallow.

Still, Self is not wholly repugnant. Many readers are likely to see him as simply an effectively rendered, modern-day version of the stage fat man—the sweating, fumbling huffer and puffer. Perhaps most will pity him when he describes the peculiar circumstances of his childhood; when he admits to being weak and miserable and desperate for help. "*Look* at my private culture," he shouts at one point. "Look at the state of it. It really isn't very nice in here. And that is why I long to burst out of the world of money and into—into what? Into the world of thought and fascination. How do I get there? Tell me, please. I'll never make it by myself. I just don't know the way."

Money, like John Self, is overweight: no reader is likely to wish it even a paragraph longer. But its depiction of our culture of mass consumption is unusually incisive; its design intricate, intriguing. And it is often quite funny, particularly on those occasions when a rather starched young writer called Martin Amis appears and thrusts and parries with the ludicrously self-inflated Self. Such scenes allow Amis to engage in a bit of amusing self-parody and—as is the fashion—to call close attention to the fictitiousness of his fiction.

Martin Amis is the son of Kingsley Amis, who is best known in America for comic novels like *Lucky Jim* and *Take a Girl Like You*. Martin Amis first achieved wide notice in 1973, when at 24 he published his first novel, an amusing but not terribly distinguished romp entitled *The Rachel Papers*. Anita Brookner, an accomplished art historian and practicing academic, did not publish her first novel—*A Start in Life*—until 1980, when she was close to 40. Since then, Brookner has produced three novels that have been well-received in both her native Brit-

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A VICTORIAN HONEYMOON

by Vernon Scannell

Her features in the frame are pale and blurred
Imprisoned in the glass. Her hairbrush soars
And swoops and rises like an ivory bird
About her stormy head. The misty gauze
Of chiffon at her breast is startled by
A rose's crimson wound; her gaze implores
Reprieve, or answer to her brimming 'Why?'

And there is no reply. She knows that she
Must grow accustomed to this bitter taste,
The gravy of despair. Outside, the sea
Repeats incessant prophecies of waste
And now its slow, unvaried voice contains
A salt intelligence which must be faced:
There is no hope of rescue from these chains.

The links are insubstantial, and they seemed
Not long ago to gleam, a golden prize,
The goal of which, since girlhood, she had dreamed,
Its aureate sparkle dancing in her eyes;
But now, they are custodial; these chains
Are fetters on the spirit; they chastise
Insulted flesh with unimagined pains.

It was another world when it, and she—
Or, rather, that seraphic girl who died,
Whose days were like a charmed eternity
Of summer picnics—were transmogrified;
Green paradise transformed to tenebrous cave,
Her beauty torn, voice shrill. The tales had lied:
No hope of princely rescue by the brave.

Her husband soon will come and she must smile;
She cannot tell him that it hurts. All day
They trudged foreign pavements, mile on mile—
Museums, churches, statues—then the bay,
As sunset bled across the sky and sea;
Sad twilight as the pilgrimage of grey
And hooded waves moved shoreward endlessly.

Then back to this. She smells tobacco-smoke.
It sickens her. She thinks she hears his tread
Outside the door. She feels self-pity choke
Her throat with thickening syrup: pain and dread
Compose their plaint, but pride aborts the cry;
It freezes in the glass; she lifts her head
And sees reflected eyes, resigned and dry.

Vernon Scannell is the recipient of the Cholmondoley Poetry Prize and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. His volumes of poetry include Winterlude, The Loving Game, The Winter Man, Epithets of War, Walking Wounded, *and* The Masks of Love. *His fiction includes* The Face of the Enemy *and* The Fight.

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ain and the United States. Indeed, Brookner's earlier novels have recently been published in paperback and can even be found in the little "literature" sections of small-town, shopping mall B. Dalton stores.

Edith Hope, the central figure in Brookner's fourth novel, *Hotel du Lac*, would not comfortably pass an evening in the company of John Self. Miss Hope is a tweedy, soft-spoken English novelist who is more than a little put off by the vulgarities of the modern age. She loathes the word "lifestyle," for example, and refuses to pack her novels with the sort of obligatory sex scenes that her agent insists help "reassure" young women that "being liberated is fun." Edith, an unapologetic romantic, keeps her heroines fully clothed—and bathed in moonlight.

Hoping to complete her latest novel, Edith travels to Lake Geneva and to the Hotel du Lac—"a traditional establishment, used to welcoming the prudent, the well-to-do, the retired, the self-effacing, the respected patrons of an earlier era of tourism." There are no sun lamps or vibrating beds at the Hotel du Lac—no sauna rooms or ice cube machines. Here, no one would pad the corridors in water wings or bikini, or linger long in the austere downstairs bar. For "it was strongly implied that prolonged drinking, whether for purposes of business or as a personal indulgence, was not *comme il faut*, and if thought absolutely necessary should be conducted either in the privacy of one's suite, or in one of the more popular establishments where such leanings were not unknown."

In this discreet establishment, Edith finds herself distracted by several of the hotel's less self-effacing guests. One of them, Mrs. Iris Pusey, is a flamboyant, apparently ageless widow who regales Edith with detailed accounts of her life as a skilled patron of quaint shops and chic boutiques. Another, Mr. Neville, is a "fastidious, careful, leisured" businessman who urges Edith to become more "self-centered"—to abandon her notions about "unselfishness being good and wickedness being bad."

In a louder, less amusing novel, Edith would embrace Mr. Neville's creed; she would join up with a band of smugglers and settle into simultaneous affairs with a priest, a Greek shipping tycoon, and a sumo wrestler. But Anita Brookner is no Judith Krantz. Like Rosamond Lehmann—to whom *Hotel du Lac* is dedicated—Ms. Brookner is a mature, perceptive, well-read novelist whose prose can be stunning and whose characters are convincingly drawn and largely appealing. Her characters experience only mild epiphanies, small victories, and quiet defeats. In *Hotel du Lac*, Edith Hope becomes a bit more aware of some of the odd ways in which people posture, and of her own considerable capacity for self-delusion. And that—in a novel as intelligent and elegantly phrased as this one—is plenty. cc

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The Bear and His Claws *by William R. Hawkins*

"The wisdom of all these latter times, in princes' affairs, is rather fine deliveries, and shiftings of dangers and mischiefs when they are near, than solid and grounded courses to keep them aloof."

—Sir Francis Bacon

Richard F. Staar: *USSR Foreign Policies After Detente*; The Hoover Institution Press; Stanford, CA.

Joseph Churba: *The American Retreat: The Reagan Foreign and Defense Policy*; Regnery Gateway; Chicago.

Henry Kissinger: *Observations: Selected Speeches and Essays, 1982-1984*; Little, Brown; Boston.

No matter where the finger roams on the map, the question inevitably arises: What are the Russians trying to do here? Richard F. Staar, a Senior Fellow at The Hoover Institution and an authority on Soviet communism, seeks to assess the global intentions and strategies of the world's most vigorously expansionist regime. Some of the subjects discussed are predictable —the Kremlin's world view and decision-making process; official attitudes toward Eastern and Western Europe, the Middle East, the Third World, East Asia, and the U.S. But what distinguishes Dr. Staar's book from others of its sort is the analysis of the tools of Soviet influence: foreign propaganda, espionage and active measures, foreign trade, and military strategy. By drawing attention to these topics, Staar emphasizes his basic theme, that the Soviet Union is not just another Great Power motivated only by *Realpolitik*, but is a power driven by a messianic ideology to advance "social progress" in *all* parts of the world. Though Marxist-Leninism may experience setbacks, its political superiority over capitalism will eventually give it victory. The West is in a state of general crisis, the area under the control of "imperialism" is shrinking while that of socialism is growing.

The Soviet military is the most obvious policy tool. It is a topic that Staar is well-qualified to discuss as former ambassador to the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks in Vienna during 1981-1983. His tables comparing the strategic forces of the U.S. and the USSR indicate that Soviet doctrine is not based on the American doctrines of deterrence and *mutual* destruction. The Soviets emphasize the successful prosecution of war and the survival of communism in any clash with the West. In old-fashioned terms, this means they plan to win. Their nuclear forces are geared to "counterforce" strikes against U.S. and NATO military forces. The window of vulnerability is still open, with the USSR able to "destroy any undefended fixed target in the United States with a single warhead." On the ground in Europe, the Red Army can launch an offensive before NATO can mobilize.

The picture is not all black. Staar believes that the Eastern European armies are unreliable and would add little to the Soviet war effort except for a few elite units integrated into the Soviet second echelon. Indeed, he expresses the optimistic view that if NATO could ever fight its way behind

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the iron curtain, the Warsaw Pact would collapse. Though new Army doctrine talks a great deal about offensive action and "deep strikes" into Pact territory, neither the U.S. nor NATO seems willing to expand conventional forces enough to defend the West, let alone push the battlefield eastward.

Given the material advantages possessed by capitalism, Soviet expansion can continue only so long as the political will of the West is paralyzed. Soviet active measures weaken Western will through disinformation and propaganda aimed at the general public and through terrorism and assassination of opponents. Staar provides a list of Soviet front organizations and other groups linked to the fronts which are active in the propaganda campaign. However, nothing serves Soviet intentions quite like the West's own extensive news media. The constant and competitive search for "news" provides the Soviets with opportunities to plant forged documents, fabricated incidents, and twisted perspectives in the Western press, where they acquire instant credibility. The Soviets have their own massive publication program in the noncommunist world, some of it in the open like the Progress Publishing House in Moscow, which translates works into 40 languages, some of it hidden like *Ethnos*, the largest newspaper in Athens, financed by the KGB and filled with pieces from correspondents in the U.S. and England who are known communists.

Though the Soviets have an elaborate network of agents and fellow-travelers, there are enough independent leftists, liberals, and political partisans in the media to aid Moscow without direct ties.

> Freedom of the press in the West provides the East with a multitude of printed and spoken criticism of public figures, organizations, society, and government policies that Soviet propagandists then cite in their own articles and speeches.

A Soviet agent is far more persuasive when he can cite the words of an American congressman that the American President's policies are a threat to world peace. Staar provides numerous examples for all the forms of Soviet clandestine activity. It makes for reading which is both fascinating and horrifying.

Joseph Churba believes that Soviet policy is working all too well and that the Reagan Administration is not coping with it much better than did the Carter Administration. Dr. Churba is a founder of the Center for International Security and served as Senior Policy Advisor to the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency 1981-1982. Like Staar, he sees Soviet ambitions as global. "The Soviet Union is not like other states. It is rather like an organization—the Communist Party—that owns a country." Churba believes pressures are mounting on the Soviets to move now rather than wait.

The Soviets already lag behind the West in their economic base, making up for this by concentrating a larger share of resources on heavy industry and armaments. Yet, they risk being left hopelessly behind by the revolution in telecommunications, robotics, and bioengineering now taking place in the capitalist states. The Soviets must try for global hegemony by the end of the century before the West can fully develop these new technological resources.

World War III started in 1975 when the Soviets airlifted weapons and supplies for 6,000 Cuban troops in Angola to establish a puppet government. Since then, the Soviets have established a network of strongpoints distant from their own borders: Vietnam, Mozambique, Nicaragua, North Yemen, Syria, Ethiopia. In 1979 they departed from the use of proxies and invaded Afghanistan. Soviet gains were "carried out by ordinary troops, using ordinary weapons, in what would seem, compared with the high technology of nuclear arms, a remarkably primitive procedure." Most of these operations occurred in areas near the Persian Gulf oil fields on which Western Europe, Japan and, to a lesser extent, the U.S. depend. There was never any thought of using nuclear weapons to stop the Soviets or their allies, but in the wake of Vietnam there was no serious thought of using conventional forces either.

Churba sees the Middle East as the central battlefield in the conflict between East and West. Disruption of oil shipments would collapse the Western economies, thus buying the USSR more time to develop its own economic potential. The threat of disruption would be a powerful diplomatic tool to drive Europe and Japan into "neutrality." The current energy glut and the reduced use of Arab oil in the U.S. has blinded many people to the fact that the world oil market still depends on Persian Gulf oil.

For many, this dependence on Arab oil has meant a need to court the Arab states at the expense of Israel. Churba believes this is the major error of both the Carter and Reagan Administrations. The Arab oil states will continue to sell to the West for economic reasons. The threat does not come from them, but from the USSR and the radical states and movements it supports. The threat is a military one and must be countered on those terms.

Israel—with the strongest military power in the region—has a stable pro-Western government and is opposed to Soviet expansion. It is the only state in the region which the U.S. can count as an ally. In contrast, the principal Arab states, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, are militarily weak, unreliable, and do not consider Soviet influence to be the main danger. Yet, to appease Arab opinion, the U.S. opposed Israel military actions against the Iraqi reactor at Osirak (1981) and against PLO forces in Lebanon (1982), despite the fact that both Iraq and the PLO are tied to the USSR. Reagan held up deliveries of military aircraft to Israel after Osirak and in Lebanon provided safe escort for PLO forces out of Beirut. The U.S. has also opposed Tel Aviv's "annexation" of the Golan Heights.

Favoring this course are the "Arabists" in the State Department and those military planners in the Pentagon who want American bases closer to the Gulf than Israel can provide. Churba advocates basing two heavy U.S. divisions in Israel to back up the Rapid Deployment Force in the belief that no Arab state can be relied upon to provide such bases. Yet, Israel has never wanted U.S. troops on its soil, and it is doubtful that Congress would approve the stationing of combat units in such a trouble-spot, even if they were available.

By the same token, Churba's proposals for reinstituting conscription and

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for mobilizing industry to build up U.S. conventional war-fighting capabilities, however desirable, seem well beyond the realm of political possibility. Congress has already brought to a halt the Reagan rearmament program. The President will be lucky if he can keep the Strategic Defense Initiative moving, a program which fits Churba's desire for an active defense against nuclear attack. Churba is correct when he observes that the U.S. and its NATO allies have a larger population and several times the economic strength of the Soviet Bloc and should thus be able to win any arms race. He simply fails to address the political problem of getting the democracies to act.

This lack of will manifests itself in several of Henry Kissinger's articles in *Observations*, a collection drawn from varied sources, including Senate testimony, speeches to NATO meetings, university seminars, interviews and articles in news magazines. Kissinger favors arms control negotiations and believes that mutually beneficial agreements are possible. But he sees defects in SALT II and strongly argues that arms control must be integrated with defense planning. His ideal —which accords with the Reagan position—would be an arms treaty which would reduce offensive weapons to a low enough level that a missile-defense system could defeat a first strike.

Unfortunately, many Americans view arms control as a substitute for military preparedness. Furthermore, negotiations are seen as a way to reduce tensions and are thus an end in themselves. The Soviets play on these misconceptions, with "almost every Soviet aggressive move . . . followed by an offer to accelerate arms talks." Yet the talks never lead to arms reductions nor to any slackening of Soviet expansion. Kissinger repeatedly advocates "linkage" between Soviet actions and arms talks to break this cycle.

But can political support be sustained for such a policy? Congress has already tied funding of new strategic programs to a Presidential certification that negotiations are being pursued to limit or ban the new weapons. The U.S. is under constant pressure to prove to its allies that it is not a greater threat to peace than the Soviets! Additional concessions to Moscow and unilateral restraint are urged upon us. Yet constant appeals to patience, moderation, and "peace" can sap the will of a nation to act at all.

Kissinger's position is to the right of the reputation he had while he was in the Nixon and Ford Administrations. In office, Kissinger remarked that it is impossible to think about issues; all you can do is react to pressure. All of the pressure in Washington pushes in the direction of retreat. These pressures can only be resisted if more people can be made aware of the facts presented by Staar, Churba, and Kissinger and then summon the strength to act on them. cc

Naming the Bard *by Jane Greer*

"Vero nihil verius"
—Legend on the coat-of-arms of Edward de Vere

Charlton Ogburn: *The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth & The Reality*; Dodd, Mead & Co.; New York; $25.00.

It's not the same as saying that God is dead, or the world is flat, or the check is in the mail. Yet one would think that Charlton Ogburn had committed that kind of atrocity, judging by the reaction of most orthodox Shakespearian scholars to Ogburn's amazingly entertaining book arguing that the works of "Shakespeare" were written not by the man from Stratford but by Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford.

Most people of average literacy will groan at another new theory—but most people of average literacy haven't studied the *old* theories, or the life of Shakspere (short "a"—the spelling counts) of Stratford, or the plays, for that matter. Ogburn shows, once and for all, that the man from Stratford is not credible as the great playwright or poet, and that not a single piece of evidence helps him. Ogburn also shows, in point after patient point (about 500 pages' worth), that Edward de Vere is more plausible than any other candidate put forth in the last 350 years.

Ogburn has used strict investigative methods, reasoning from the facts, to a list of suspects, to the one man at whom all clues seem to point, and only then working backward from Oxford to Shakespeare. The first half of the tome demonstrates what we *don't* know about Shakspere of Stratford, which would fill an encyclopedia, and the little we *do* know, which, as one Shakespeare biographer admits, can be written on a half sheet of notepaper (although that has not kept him and others from inventing elaborate, voluminous biographies of the Bard). The second half of the book shows that hundreds of details of Oxford's intimate life and circumstances are mirrored, too frequently and exactly for coincidence, in the plays and sonnets.

Shakspere left only six signatures (all bordering on illiteracy), no letters or anything else rumored to be in his own hand, and no school records. London royalty, who adored him, and famous contemporary actors and writers, who would have been manifestly affected by his presence in their midst, never mention him. Oh, they talk about the *plays*, and in a handful of instances mention "Shakespeare" or "Shakespear," but that character *has* no character, no personality, no flesh, in the records, especially when compared with what we know about his contemporaries. Never do we read, "Rode to the Globe with Will Shakspere tonight," or "Shakespeare told the funniest story about his childhood as a glover's son." Never is the name "Shakespeare" mentioned in such a context as to imply that he was the man from Stratford—who died, inci-

Jane Greer edits and publishes Plains Poetry Journal.

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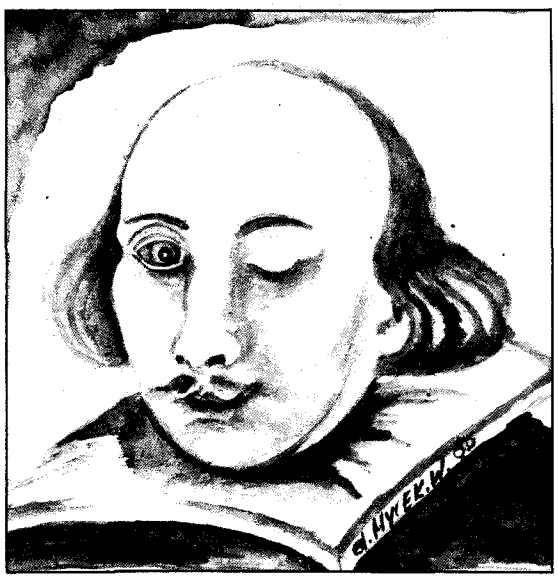
dentally, without notice by his adoring public. It is almost as if the chroniclers of the day were *keeping silent* about one of its most amazing phenomena—and that would be as out-of-character for those London gossips as it would for modern journalists. The Earl of Oxford, on the other hand, is praised for his wit and writing by nearly every contemporary, even those who hated him.

"Aha, but what about Ben Jonson?" fans of the Stratford Bard will ask. "He *talks* about Shakespeare; they were *drinking* buddies, weren't they?" That *Shakespeare*—whoever he was—and Jonson occasionally lifted a cup together is most probable, although they were rivals. But that Shakespeare was *Shakspere* is never hinted at—quite the contrary, according to Ogburn's reading—in the perplexingly few Jonsonian references to the greatest dramatist of his time and ours.

The most widely used example of



Jonson's "knowing Shakespeare" is his introduction to the Shakespeare First Folio, which even the staunchest Stratfordians admit is not what it half-heartedly claims to be. Ogburn's argument is much too detailed to more than hint at here, but it will help to remember the wild enthusiasm for jokes and puns in Elizabethan drama and poetry. The first problem—the first joke, says Ogburn—the alert reader encounters in the First Folio is the strange, all-wrong-but-skillfully-executed engraving of the face of "Shakespeare," the one all schoolchildren know, for which Ogburn's explanation is as plausible as any other put forth to date. The biggest puzzle, though, is Jonson's poem of 40 couplets in unparalleled praise of Shakespeare, in which Honest Ben appears to be trying to keep the dead Stratfordian's bones out of Westminster Abbey. Ogburn conjectures that Jonson was trying to cover up Shakespeare's true identity, because he knows that Shakspere's bones aren't Shakespeare's and would ruin the toney neighborhood in the Abbey.

Two lines from Jonson's poem, above all others, are used religiously to "prove" that the Stratford man authored the plays. Jonson says, "And though thou hadst small Latin, and less Greek, from thence to honour thee, I would not seek for names." Orthodox scholars use this line to prove that Shakespeare was ignorant of Latin and Greek. But (apart from the question of whether a man ignorant of Latin and Greek could have *written* the plays and sonnets) Ogburn points out that "though" can mean not only "in spite of the fact that" but also "even supposing that." Then there is "Sweet Swan of Avon!" from Jonson's poem. This *surely* proves the Stratford theory, say the Stratfordians. Ogburn sighs and reminds us that de Vere had a home at Rugby, on the same river Avon as Stratford. (There are three rivers Avon in England; the town of Oxford is on a second.)

Examples of other writers praising "Shakespeare" in ways which preclude Shakspere abound. Edmund Spenser published his *Faerie Queene* in 1590. It includes sonnets written by Spenser to leading Court figures. There is an adulatory sonnet to Oxford, describing him as the favorite of the Muses—but nothing to Shakspere. Published in the same year, Spenser's *Teares of the Muses* mourns the sad state of the arts in Elizabethan England(!). Thalia, the Muse of Comedy, says, "Our pleasant Willy, ah! is dead of late; / With whom all joy and jolly merriment / Is also deaded, and in dolour rent." She adds, "But that same gentle spirit, from whose pen / Large streams of honey and sweet nectar flow, / Scorning the boldness of such base-born men, / Which dare their follies forth to rashly throw; / Doth rather choose to sit in idle cell, / Than so himself to mockery to sell." Orthodox scholars generally agree that "Willy" could be no one but Shakespeare—but no record shows *Shakspere* in London until 1596, and at that point the orthodox calendar has him just *beginning* his career, not ending it—whereas in 1589 Oxford dropped out of the public eye for a time ("Our pleasant Willy, ah! is dead of late"), after which Shakespeare's plays as we know them began to surface. In his *Palladis Tamia* (1598), Francis Meres called de Vere—not Shakspere—"the best for comedy among us." And Ogburn wonders how Shakspere, as "base-born" a man as one could find, would dare to scorn publicly his betters. Hands and heads were removed for less.

So what *is* Charlton Ogburn's theory? Briefly (and brevity does not do the theory justice): Edward de Vere, because of his rank and position as premier Earl of the land, one of Queen Elizabeth's long-time favorites at Court, and possibly her lover, was prohibited from acknowledging authorship of his works of drama and verse. Not only was it considered an embarrassing downward leap from his social status to spend his time in such creations, the works also cut too close to the royal bone in many cases. Because Elizabeth was Elizabeth, though, she valued his work for its literary merit and patriotic influence and allowed him to produce it anonymously or under a pseudonym, "Shakespeare, or "Shake-spear." (Oxford's crest as Viscount Bulbeck was a lion holding a broken spear. And, as Ogburn writes, "*Hasti-vibrans*, the Spear-shaker, was the sobriquet of Pallas Athena, who was said to have sprung from the brow of Zeus fully armed and brandishing a spear. Pallas Athena was the patron goddess of Athens, home of the theatre, while in Rome the guild of poets and dramatists met in the Temple of Pallas.") Many members of royalty and the most favored dramatists and actors knew "Shakespeare's" identity but kept silent, lest *they* be incriminated by the plays—or "shortened by a head" by the Queen's Lord Treasurer, the second most powerful person in the kingdom, William Cecil Lord Burghley, Edward de Vere's guardian and father-in-law.

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Following a series of events Ogburn admits he can only guess at, William Shakspere of Stratford was paid off to be de Vere's "front man." Possibly Shakspere heard rumors about "Shakespeare" and came to London to try to cash in on the name (some documents show that this would be characteristic of Shakspere). Such a move would have seemed expedient to those protecting de Vere's—and the Queen's and Court's—reputation. Finally, the records of both men were wiped clean of any incriminating evidence. (If important defense secrets could be safeguarded from World War II until their recent declassification, surely an absolute autocrat could manage this much deception.) According to Ogburn, this is the only presently available logical explanation for all the facts we know and the conspicuous gaps in both men's records.

The Oxford theory is not original with Ogburn. John Thomas Looney (pronounced "Loney") first put it forth in 1920, in his heavily documented "*Shakespeare*" *Identified*, to great derision and greater academic silence. Looney was a real pioneer, although Ogburn is much more the stylist and puts real flesh on his man. Looney followed the strict investigative techniques which Ogburn would carry on—studied closely the plays and sonnets as if they were a crime with no suspects—and determined that Shakespeare would have *had* to be a recognized genius, an unconventional loner, of pronounced and known literary tastes, enthusiastic about the drama, a lyric poet of recognized talent, of superior education, and an associate of educated men. In addition, he would have had feudal connections, membership in the higher aristocracy, connection with Lancastrian supporters, enthusiasm for Italy and for sports, including falconry, a love of music, bad judgment in money matters, a doubtful and rather conflicting attitude toward women, and Catholic leanings tinged with skepticism. Many of these traits are self-evident to even a first-time reader of Shakespeare. Looney took this evidence and found himself a suspect who fit the crime like a hand fits in a tailor-made glove—Oxford—and only then reversed the process to illustrate how Oxford *must* be Shakespeare.

Since Looney, the Oxford/Shakespeare connection has captured the interest of many. Looney's book was republished in 1975 by Kennikat Press, with much additional material. One of the most intriguing chapters in the two-book set is "Lord Oxford and the 'Shakespeare' Portraits," by the book's editor, Ruth Loyd Miller. One striking example of a mystery answered by *neither* the Stratfordian nor the Oxfordian theory is the X-ray and infrared findings of Charles Wisner Barrell concerning portraits of "Shakespeare." Several are demonstrably painted over, rubbed out, modified, and changed from the originals—which resemble genuine, known paintings of de Vere. If Shakspere wrote the plays, why would his portraits be laid over de Vere's in the mid-1600's? If de Vere wrote the plays, why cover up his portraits with Shakspere's (and all the "Shaksperes" look different)? What Barrell found defies explanation at this point, but *some* relationship existed.

Orthodox scholars can hardly be bothered to show where Looney and his converts are wrong. When they don't ignore his theory (their safest course), they call it "snobbery." Looney (an unfortunately vulnerable name) and Ogburn and their ilk are undemocratic, elitist, out to do in the anomalous Shakspere simply because he was a commoner, the greatest leveler of rank in Western history.

I am myself one of the multitude who never seriously questioned that the man from Stratford wrote the plays. I made my pilgrimage to gaze on his tomb and the wall memorial in charming Trinity Church. Charlton Ogburn, bless the man, makes me feel like a fool.

What *is* it that has kept Charlton Ogburn hot on de Vere's trail for nearly 48 years, ever since as a 26-year-old he read an article in 1937 about Looney's work? Simply this: What the 17th Earl of Oxford has over

REVISIONS

Kirk's Eliot

A modern classic is back in print, Russell Kirk's *Eliot and His Age: T.S. Eliot's Moral Imagination in the Twentieth Century* (Sherwood Sugden, 1117 Eighth Street, La Salle, IL 61301; $12.95). Part of Dr. Kirk's great contribution to contemporary thought has been his reassessment of conservative thinkers in England and America. John Randolph and Edmund Burke are two of the most obvious examples, but Kirk may be at his best on Eliot, whose work he defends against both political progressives and literary reactionaries.

Much to the chagrin of almost everyone, this reactionary Anglican royalist remains unquestionably the most significant writer in English of the 20th century. Yeats may have been a more gifted poet and Housman a greater scholar (no one exceeded him as a critic), but no one has come close to Eliot's impact. With very little support from the community of letters, he set himself against the spirit of the age. He did more than defend "the permanent things"; he kept them alive and in the mainstream of our literary experience. How many of us, I wonder, read *Ash Wednesday* as unbelieving young radicals, turning the phrases over and over in our minds until we were almost hypnotized? With Eliot as a believer it became difficult to pigeonhole the faith as something reserved for the darker corners of Tennessee and Indiana.

What Kirk has done in this remarkable volume is to provide a context for the master in which his entire work can be appreciated. It is a work of scholarship and affection from the hand of a scholar who knew Eliot and shared his sympathies. Other books have been written on the subject, some of them useful, but Dr. Kirk's Eliot is different: it is essential. cc

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all the other possibilities is that, with him, everything suddenly makes sense, down to the smallest detail, whereas with Shakspere nothing makes sense. No longer must we try to believe, without a scrap of evidence or a single corroborating record, that Shakspere—son, husband, and *father* of illiterates—was given a classical education (but "small Latin, and less Greek"?) in that wide spot in the road called Stratford, to rival that of any modern Ph.D. (Ironically, it is today's Ph.D.'s who ask us to accept this.) No longer must we try to believe that Shakspere, on the strength of his overwhelming genius, traveled so widely and in such royal company (although that royal company never talks about him) that he simply soaked up his boundless knowledge of falconry, field sports, horsemanship, music, astrology, horticulture, law, mathematics, and all the sciences, foreign countries and languages, classical literature, and his still-unsurpassed ability to hammer new language out of old. No longer must we try to believe the thousand substanceless and contradictory "details" of Shakspere's undocumented life.

This is not to say that there is proof that what we've been taught about Shakespeare is false, just that there is no proof that it is true and an enormous body of otherwise-inexplicable evidence that Edward de Vere was Shakespeare. No human behavior is perfectly consistent, but why should we strain so hard to believe in Shakspere when there is another so infinitely suited for the role that he deserves at least open-minded scholarship?

Aye, but there's the rub. There is no telling how a new understanding would change the way we see the world. Even the sacrosanct Oxford English Dictionary may need revision. For instance, the 1981 O.E.D. credits Shakespeare with the first use of "glutton" or "gluttoning" as an intransitive verb in 1600 (Sonnet 75), but Oxford's first wife, Anne, used it in 1584 in a sad, ungainly little poem mourning the death of her only son. The first use of "base" meaning "low in the moral sense" is given as *Henry VI*, 1593; Oxford uses it in his introductory letter to the publication of his friend Thomas Bedingfield's *Cardanus Comfort* in 1573.

I am myself one of the multitude who never seriously questioned that the man from Stratford wrote the plays. I made my pilgrimage to gaze on his tomb and the wall memorial in charming Trinity Church. Charlton Ogburn, bless the man, makes me feel like a fool. But I have nothing to lose from admitting this, and if future discoveries make me a double fool for accepting the de Vere theory, I will not have staked my career on it. An academic is a different sort of animal, and tenure is a precious commodity. I have a great deal of sympathy for those with much to lose by this book, who ignore Ogburn, or put words in his mouth he never said, to make him look ridiculous because they cannot show where he is wrong.

On the other hand, there is the pursuit of truth. ∞

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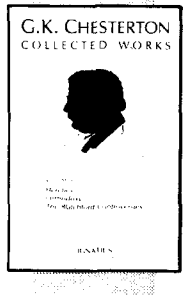

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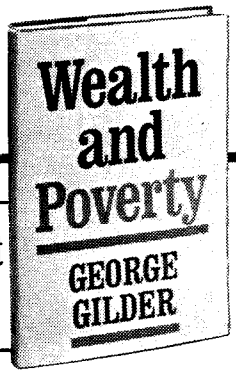

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REALISM AND THE SPIRIT *by Eugène Ionesco*

The following is the text of M. Ionesco's address at the 1985 Ingersoll Prizes Awards Banquet:

I am extremely proud and honored to have been awarded the very prestigious T.S. Eliot Prize, which has been given to such persons as Jorge Luis Borges and the novelist Anthony Powell, artists who exemplify the prime values of the humanist tradition.

Since I wonder whether I am really worthy of this prize, and whether I deserve to be associated with personalities as powerful of those of my predecessors, it is with some

trepidation that I appear here before you. Still, though I may not judge myself as being quite up to their measure, the fact that the jury of The Ingersoll Foundation has been kind enough to confer The T.S. Eliot Prize on me reassures me about the character or the value of what I have done personally.

Since you know T.S. Eliot, ladies and gentlemen, and know him far better than I, I should just like to recall a few of the fundamental points in his life, or rather his work, in commemoration.

After his studies at the Sorbonne and Oxford, T.S. Eliot took the path of devoting himself entirely to literature, and to literature of the highest order. With the very first work he produced, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," in 1917, he broke with the literary tradition of the 19th century. He became the friend of Ezra Pound, and it was through Pound that he was introduced to the new Italian poetry, while, as we know, T.E. Hulme shaped his critical perspective.

Pierre Leyris, who translated his works into French, would later say of *The Waste Land*, which marks the summit of his poetic creation, that it was a multidimensional fresco, in which the presence of the author is as palpable as that of Courbet in *The Painter's Studio*.

Eliot's adherence to the royalist cause was accompanied by his espousal of classic values, and in works that followed he is visibly concerned with the relation between appearance and that spiritual reality whose themes are penitence and redemption. The theme of redemption in time and the inspiration provided by the Bible are, indeed, present in all his subsequent works.

I regret that my ignorance of English has kept me from a deeper knowledge of the work of this great mystic poet. Nevertheless, personally and in spirit, I feel myself very close to him, as I would to an older brother, a mighty forebear in the art of writing for the stage.

It is, in point of fact, Eliot's dramatic work that moves me most profoundly and, along with other works, it is his great masterpiece, *Murder in the Cathedral*, that I remember most fundamentally and intensely. This play of Eliot's made him the creator of an avant-garde. Like all true avant-garde works, it rediscovered and reaffirmed the bonds of the most ancient of traditions. It was not so much the reintroduction into this modern tragedy of the antique chorus, a feature that may appear somewhat formal, that won my absolute admiration, as it was the profound spirituality of *Murder in the Cathedral*. That is, the idea of sacrifice—for the honor of a cause that is God against king, God against political power. Sacrifice, as was the poet's thought, saves souls: the protagonist of the play, Thomas Becket, offers himself up to death, willingly, gladly. He makes the choice of remaining what he is, here on this earth, and for all eternity, of finding life in eternity here on earth, and from this moment forward.

In contrast to those modern dramas that go astray with minor themes such as the futility of politics, ideology, love, money—that is, with diversions, whether slight or weighty—Eliot sticks to what is essential. That is, to man's destiny,

This address was translated into English by Professor Norman Spector of Northwestern University. Readers who wish to obtain a copy of the original French text should send $1.50 to The Ingersoll Foundation, 934 N. Main St., Rockford, IL 61103.

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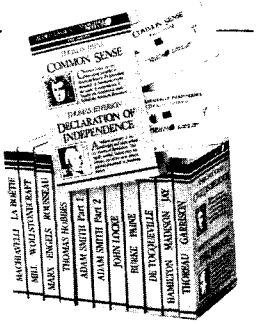

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a destiny that is metaphysical and spiritual, and that can be nothing else.

Eliot is not often performed in France these days. But there is no one who doesn't remember the wonderful hands of Jean Vilar joined in prayer in the initial performances of *Murder in the Cathedral* at the Vieux Colombier, right after the Second World War.

This spirituality, indeed, through the use of other means —less forcefully, perhaps—is what I have tried in turn to express: the essential, keen, fundamental need for religion and a metaphysical perspective, without which man is but a ridiculous puppet. With the difference that I have portrayed these values through contrast, negation, absence. If I have shown men to be ridiculous, ludicrous, it was in no way out of any desire for comic effect, but rather, difficult as this is during these times of universal spiritual decay, to proclaim the truth.

It is still possible, at least, to show what man becomes, or what he may become, when he is cut off from all transcendence, when the notion of metaphysical destiny is lacking in the human heart. That is, when "realistic" reality is substituted for the Real, the eternal. It is the *sacred* that *is* what is real, as my friend Mircea Eliade has so well put it. The so-called real whisked away by realism—for realism is not real—is only a convention, an academic posture, a low truth. The truth is quite the contrary: the real is not just a movement, a simple ideology that will pass. It is what is incorruptible.

That is the path I have chosen. I have tried to portray the abyss that is the absence of faith, the absence of a spiritual life. If I have consequently at times been comic, it was with the intention to teach. The comic is only the other side of the tragic; absence is only a form of the call or the presence of Him who waits behind the door for someone to open it for Him.

But perhaps He, Himself, will open it, and Himself appear, in His splendor, His beauty, His power, His glory.

I should have liked to present myself more effectively, more amply. Another time, perhaps. I hope so. ∞

SIMPLE GOETHE *by Thomas Molnar*

Last summer, I read simultaneously Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, his autobiography up to the time of writing *Werther*, his collected travel diaries, and his life by Emil Ludwig. Of the three biographical works, my unhesitating judgment is that Ludwig's book is the disappointment: it compares to Goethe's own narrative of his youth as the description of a garden compares with the actual fragrance and colors. Although Ludwig was an excellent biographer of Napoleon and Bismarck, the poet Goethe seems to have been too much for his powers. He keeps exclaiming, "What a genius!" or "This friend, that mistress felt at his contact that they were dealing with a genius!" Distracted, we read on, and remain unconvinced—by Ludwig. We read Goethe himself—and we know.

But it is not this much-abused word that matters. It is the *je ne sais quoi* of Goethe's work, although, mind you, *Dichtung und Wahrheit* was written some 40 years after the events he recollects, from notebooks, copies of letters, but mostly from reminiscing. Yet the diary is superbly alive.

What is in Goethe that all modern writers lack? They lack it, by the way, not because of some personal deficiency, but because the past 200 years have emptied us of the direct experience of things—of colors, tastes, smells, rocks, trees, of slow-moving time, space not seen through a car or plane window, of real objects instead of plastic, of real life instead of life-on-TV or the subway car—and given us only abstractions instead. Thus the first and greatest difference between Goethe and contemporary writers is that Goethe used all his senses, and poetry for him was the mastery over actual experience. How far from him the erudite and recondite verses of Mallarmé or Eliot who chiseled words to perfection and weighed them down with layers of meaning! Goethe walked through the Harz Mountains or Italy, sat down when tired, and wrote what he saw and felt.

Years ago, I visited Goethe's family house in Frankfurt. It is a museum of Goetheana, well-kept, airy, spacious. Now I read the obvious, namely that he rode out on horseback often, visiting his beloved. So the house in Frankfurt must have had a stable, and stable smells of horses and manure. This in itself sets Goethe off from the modern world and the meticulous museum. Can you imagine Valéry or Auden riding a horse and taking their poem's rhythm from the galloping animal?

Goethe's poetry and prose breathe this contact with things. Then there was the second thing that was real for Goethe, lost for us. Chateaubriand, 20 years his junior, who also lived on *that* side of the threshold of modernity, notes in his *Mémoires* that future generations will live vicariously: they will experience things less than they will read or hear about them. Life once removed from the real. And Chateaubriand did not dream that it was going to be twice removed: in front of the TV screen, through newspapers, through Great Books Programs. Ungenuine throughout.

An episode of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* illustrates frighteningly well what the French *confrère* meant. Goethe is 24 years old and is everywhere acclaimed as the author of *Sufferings of the Young Werther*. (Napoleon was to read *Werther* seven times.) Letters to Goethe arrive in large numbers; young men strike the Wertherian pose and wear his blue waistcoat. Some even commit suicide, imitating the young melancholy hero. One letter strikes the author with its disagreeable insistence to meet him. The poet does not answer, but some months later a second, complaining note arrives with the same insistence: offer of friendship, exchange of souls, impatience. Goethe remains silent. He

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is repelled, sensing behind the letters a lonely abstractionmonger, a man afraid to live. Another year passes. Then, in the course of a travel, Goethe stops at the village where the letters were posted. He inquires, and without unmasking his own identity, presents himself at the young man's house. The latter receives him with passionate reverence, then tells him the story of his vain efforts. His personality is fully revealed to the poet, who flees. The next day he leaves town, sending only a note of excuse.

One evening's conversation made clear to the poet that this passionate and somber young man was living through others, fictional figures or their authors. An advance messenger of the new age, romantic and subjective. Goethe indeed was to make remarks similar to those of Chateaubriand about the new age in which experience will dry up and people live as behind a screen. From Italy, where his hungry senses were filled to the brim, he wrote to Frau von Stein these sober lines: "The new age will transform society into a huge hospital, and all of us into patients and nurses." The welfare state, human rights, social protest, psychoanalysis—everything is there, anticipated in this single observation.

He also foresaw the fashionable philosophies, phenomenology, existentialism. The first was an effort to prove that, although I do not know the real, I know myself in the process of knowing; the second was an effort to prove that I am so much I that I must regard the world as hostile—and feel nausea when it intrudes. Goethe had no such problems, for, as Claudel said of Rimbaud, for him, too, the "outside world exists." Such a statement is today the greatest scandal for writers, philosophers, and the ubiquitous "artists." Even students in their very first philosophy class in college are taught, not that the world exists, but that they must doubt even their own existence—in the shadows of Descartes, Kant (whom Goethe could not stand), and Wittgenstein.

Yet, Goethe was incurably an "inner man," struggling all his life, until about 70, to achieve the state of a "balanced man," to incarnate the harmony between the lyrical and the severe. Ludwig quotes Schiller, the only friend of his mind, who said of Goethe at 50 that he was equilibrium personified, an Apollonian statue. Quite rightly, the biographer berates the witness, and we know why from Goethe's notes. Forever torn, yet making the correct choices; everything always sacrificed for the creative work, for penetration into secrets: of the nature of light, the life of plants, conciseness in exposition, the human heart.

With all that, discretion, withdrawal, form imposed on content, sense of duty, measure. These aspects are perhaps most in contrast with today's fashion defined by prizes given according to the number of copulations and defecations on page, stage, and screen. Ludwig tells us of torrid love affairs in young and older Goethe's life, something you would never guess from the poet's own diary. Fifty years later, he is still protecting reputations. Here and there a personal remark, although his soul and dreams are otherwise open to the reader. Always, he is simple. He writes about the campaign against the revolutionary French armies: "They gathered around me eagerly [the German soldiers just defeated at Valmy] knowing I would cheer them up with good-natured stories, pertinent remarks." "The young man [himself, in third person] had little to recommend him to the ladies, except perhaps his dark, intense eyes and his ability to write poems anywhere, any time, on any subject." "I left Frederike [a great love of his twenty years] on the road, I on horseback, kissing her hand. We both knew that it was the last time."

People, and students in "creative writing" classes, no longer write like this—or do they now only use tape-recorders? It used to be not Goethe's style alone, it was that of his age: Voltaire and Dr. Johnson, the sentimental Rousseau and the Rousseauist/Wertherian Chateaubriand, the eroticising Choderlos de Laclos, Stendahl—they all wrote like this; with ease, flowing sentences, the well-tempered word. In music, Mozart.

How did they do it? Well, for one thing, by writing many letters, then recopying them, reading them later in intimate company, publishing them in volumes for the like-minded. Today, we regard the epistolary novel as a bore, yet letter-writing taught people how to measure sentences on an internal metronome, choose the one effective word, catch the fitting tone. In short, the method and the objective, in writing as in portrait or landscape painting, adjusted to the concrete world, neither runaway subjectivism, nor experience filtered through other people's lives. This is how simplicity was mastered.

Once at the top of mastery—of oneself and one's style—a barely breathed poem may express the entire human cosmos. At 28, Goethe carved this in the wooden wall of a log cabin, in the mountains:

Alles ist Ruh in dem Walde,
Warte nur, Balde
Ruhest du auch.

All is quiet in the woods,
Wait a little. Soon
You too will know rest.

A dream at 28, achieved by 70. Between the two, he was paying the price. cc

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Between the Lines

(continued from p. 9)

Greek class is corrected by a teacher, he can easily ascertain the rightness or wrongness of the correction. Points of history, grammar, and metrics are open to investigation. Facts have a fine and democratic quality. But interpretation is a hieratic mystery, closed to all but the initiates who have learned to recite and manipulate the sacred language.

Interpretive criticism has come a long way since Prof. Richards first developed his system. New schools have risen and fallen with the grim regularity of pre-Socratic philosophy—error replacing error. Richards' own theories have now all the vitality of Ozymandias' statue—look on, ye mortals and despair! The New Critics had set sail for that Golden Age promised by Arnold but found themselves lost in their own subjectivity: "Your mind and you are our Sargasso Sea," wrote Ezra Pound. Richards himself thought his methods would be picked up by unscrupulous poets "desiring to increase their sales," but in looking back, we cannot say that all their efforts have resulted in a widespread appreciation of poetry, much less in the refinement of the art itself. Of the poets in Britain and America who have made a noise in the world—Yeats, Pound, Eliot, Frost—or have enjoyed a universal critical reputation—Hart Crane, Wallace Stevens, W.H. Auden—almost all were practicing their craft before they were exposed to any of the new critical theories. The exceptions go a long way toward proving the rule. Dylan Thomas, John Betjeman, Philip Larkin, and Stevie Smith are all postwar poets with large followings, but none of them has cared much for formal criticism.

It is easier to see the impact of criticism on the readership 50 years ago. American high school and college students seem to have enjoyed some kinds of poetry. Ordinary people read Frost, and many of us can remember parents and grandparents who could quote yards of Tennyson and Shakespeare.

Now, nobody reads the poets except persons whose livelihood is at stake, and even they don't profess to like it much (as C.S. Lewis was early in pointing out). It's all very strange, since nearly half the population is going to college, most of them taking at least a year of English where they are instructed in *Sound and Sense* or *Understanding Poetry*. Perhaps that is the problem. I remember all too well the professorial yammerings on the real meaning of books I had once been simple enough to enjoy and the relief I felt on entering a class in chemistry or German: at least the scientists and pedants were not always poking at some poor fellow's motives and meaning or fiddling with the buttons on a corpse.

> Our meddling intellect
> misshapes the beauteous forms of things—
> we murder to dissect.

Wordsworth was not the soundest of critics, but he was a good prophet. How many students have spent two years in English classes, only to discover that poetry was too complicated for their poor heads, that poems were riddles constructed to trap the unwary and give opportunities to glib girls who learned to parrot the professor's line?

Of course, there is a place for critics and men of letters. But their role, to use Allen Tate's language, has more to do with evaluation than "the Communication of insights." This evaluation must have an ethical base, at the very least. As Tate put it, "There would be no hell for modern man if our men of letters were not calling attention to it" ("The Man of Letters in the Modern World"). We may even have an interest in what an Allen Tate or a Cleanth Brooks has to say about the meaning of a poem. (Donald Davidson's essays on Hardy, I must confess, came as a revelation.) But, in general, what is the point to a hermeneutic criticism when it is not directed to ethical or religious ends? The greatest critics of the past never practiced it. They were either philosophical (or rhetorical) theorists like Aristotle, Longinus, and Coleridge, or critics in the truest sense like Johnson, who groped for standards of good and bad. Even Arnold, who wrote a great deal about the qualities of various poets, did not generally stoop to explanation. Arnold was a gentleman, and gentlemen—we used to be told—never explained. For what most critics do now, I can only think of

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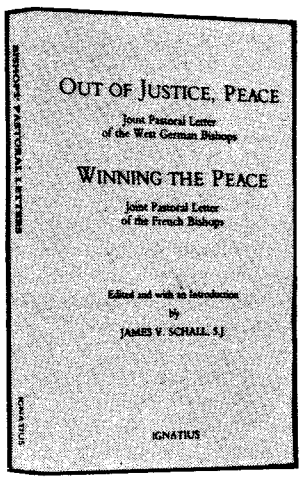
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two obvious parallels: allegorical interpretation and scriptural hermeneutics.

Literary texts can lose their relevance for some part (or all) of a culture. If the texts have acquired an almost sacred character—like Homer—this presents a problem. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are filled with scenes which later Greeks, especially philosophers, found distasteful. Perhaps the worst were those in which the gods fought with each other. Plato wanted to expel Homer, along with all poets, from his Republic, but the Stoics preferred to see a hidden allegorical meaning in all the divine struggles. Of course, they distorted the text at the same time as they preserved it. Ovid underwent a similar treatment in the later Middle Ages. In each age, the emergence of interpretive criticism was the sign of a great cultural discontinuity between the texts and the interpreters.

A more obviously relevant analogy is the long tradition of scriptural exegesis. The writings of the Old and New Testaments were composed over a period of several thousand years in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. By the time of the Roman Empire, Jewish scriptures required explication and commentary, and by our time there is hardly a line that has not received volumes of attention. Not only is this the result of cultural discontinuity, but the stakes are even considerably higher than they were in the case of Homer. For believers—Jewish and Christian—a proper understanding of scripture is essential if we are to be in a proper relationship to our Creator. For the Protestant Christian, the salvation of his soul can depend on a correct interpretation of certain test passages.

This brings us back once again to Arnold and his sincere wish to see poetry pick up the religion's fallen torch. In an earlier age of unbelief, Nero, so the rumor went, played the lyre and sang while much of the imperial city burned to the ground. It need not be added that Nero had lost his faith in the gods of Rome—or that he blamed the fire on the Christians. But contrary to Arnold's expectations, we faithless moderns are not fiddling or versifying. Instead, we devote our efforts to interpreting the sacred texts of Melville, D.H. Lawrence, and Gerard Manley Hopkins. But rather than winning converts, the major effect of this monumental scribbling has been to broaden the gap between serious literature and popular audiences. To his credit, Leavis recognized part of the problem. He lamented the rise of the highbrow/lowbrow distinction and pointed out the success of *Hamlet*, which "appealed at a number of levels of response" in 17th-century England. But Leavis' only prescription turned out to be a fastidious recoil from all the coarseness and vulgarity of modern life. A few voices were raised in protest—notably Hart Crane, who insisted on the poet's need to assimilate the machine age. But in the end, Crane, too, is grist for the hermeneutic mill, and he is condemned to reenact his sordid life and tragic suicide a thousand times a year for the entertainment of modern poetry classes.

If poetry is anything worth all this attention and if poets have in fact anything to tell us, then we owe it to them not to interfere in that intensely personal relationship between poets and their audiences. Ancient books need expositors, but if the poets of recent centuries have not succeeded in making their meaning plain enough for a reader, why should we bother? Perhaps a student will not savor all the significance in "Burnt Norton" or Donne's sonnets, but what he can make out for himself (with the help of a few notes) will be his forever. Reading literature is a kind of marriage of two minds, but when an interpreter slips in to exercise his *droit du seigneur*, he takes all the honesty and half the pleasure out of the experience.

—*Thomas Fleming*

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COMMENDABLES

Aloha, Captain Cook

Marshall Sahlins: *Islands of History*; The University of Chicago Press; Chicago.

The relationship between culture and history, structure and event is one of those questions to which every school of social science has an answer. Marshall Sahlins belongs to that vanishing species: the historically minded anthropologist. Like his mentor, Leslie White, and his colleague, Elman Service, Sahlins has dedicated much of his career to discovering the significance of cultural change. While White and Service concentrated on the old problem of evolutionary stages, Sahlins has taken to philosophizing about the nature of things—a questionable practice for an anthropologist, but by no means unusual (cf. Clifford Geertz, Levi-Strauss, and the pop *philosophe*, Marvin Harris). For all his quirks and oddities (likes Marx, hates sociobiologists), Sahlins may be the most interesting of the lot.

Islands of History is a series of essays, not quite integrated into a book, on the meaning of history in Polynesia. In one way or another, most of them touch upon the strange circumstances surrounding the death of Captain Cook on 14 February 1779. Sahlins demonstrates that Cook was received by the Polynesians as the god Lono, but, through a complex process of transmutation, he came to be seen as a sacrificial victim. The mystery—for there is a mystery which Sahlins approaches like a detective—is a tangle of many threads: Polynesian religious beliefs, sexual behavior, and the conflicting expectations of commoners and kings. To understand Cook's last days, we must understand how his arrival and subsequent actions fit into the cultural preconceptions of the natives. What seems at first sight a simple act of political assassination turns out to be part of a cultural process in which the past becomes present. Put crudely, culture is prior to politics.

In a perplexing and sometimes brilliant concluding chapter, Sahlins tentatively explores "the relation between structure and event," beginning with the proposition that "the transformation of a culture is a mode of its reproduction." He repudiates the "basic Western distinctions" between history and structure, stability and change and argues for culture as a synthesis of both. "Every practical change is also a cultural reproduction." The Hawaiian chiefs were able to deal productively with Cook, precisely because they could fit his arrival into a mythological scheme that included past and present: "The irruption of Captain Cook from beyond the horizon was a truly unprecedented event. . . . But by thus encompassing the existentially unique in the conceptually familiar, the people embed their present in the past."

For Sahlins, culture is the key: "the organization of the current situation in the terms of a past." Happenings are only historical events, because culture makes them so. Repeatedly he alludes to a Maori uprising during the 1850's. What the British saw as a political rebellion against their presence in New Zealand was actually a war against the flagpole, which represented—to the Maori and even to the British—conquest and dispossession (the same flagpole was attacked by Maori protestors in 1982-83). But it does not take an anthropologist or cultural historian to realize the significance: Americans and Europeans, no less than Maori and Hawaiians, are constantly engaged in reproducing and reinterpreting their culture. The political process—all the gimcracks and chicanery of electioneering and legislating—derives its meaning and relevance from the underlying culture. In the long run, what matters is not what "happens" but how that happening is incorporated into the mythology that shapes our social life. At the lowest level, control of the White House and the Congress counts for less than control of schools and churches. If you really want to change the world, forget about politics and start talking back to your minister and your children's teachers. (TF) cc

Proust Among the Buckeyes

by Dennis R. Perry

Helen Hooven Santmyer: *Ohio Town*; Harper & Row; New York.

Originally published in 1963 by the Ohio State University Press, *Ohio Town* quickly drew a near-cult following that Harper & Row would now evidently like to amplify in the wake of Santmyer's best selling " . . . *And Ladies of the Club.*" This personal diary of a small, Midwestern town's evolution can be best summed up in Santmyer's own words: "There is pleasure in what can be remembered."

The strength of the book is in the subtlety of her memories, in an arresting tension that hovers between celebration, elegy, and wholesome nostalgia. Whether or not we are of her generation, her reminiscences strike familiar and universal chords, and the fictionalized history of Xenia, Ohio, becomes a stroll through American history. Santmyer focuses each chapter on a different aspect of the town—courthouse, main street, library, cemetery, church, school, opera house, and railroad—and then leisurely meditates on the people and events that mark each place in her memory. She concludes that there is an "inexhaustible richness and complication of ordinary daily life" that constitutes "the hard, sometimes bitter but always rewarding experience of being men and women."

Her portraits of some of the town's people form a memorable gallery of quintessentially American men and women. Whereas Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* (to which this has been inappropriately compared) highlights an array of frustrated and unbalanced town misfits, Santmyer presents the less sensational yet dignified simplicity associated with even the most humble of Xenia's "characters." In the library we meet Miss McElwain, stoop-shouldered, thin librarian, whose sharp, hostile eyes and tight bun of thin hair terrorized young patrons. Though her short fuse brought many a child to tears, "if you liked books more than you

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feared her . . . she forgave you for being a child." She was found dead kneeling on the floor soon after the town had honored her 50 years in the library: "Whether she died praying or not was important to the Methodists, but not to the rest of us, who knew she was of the Elect." We meet the talented printer at the opera house. He split his black tights in a critical spot while reciting "Woodman, Spare that Tree" and forced his wife to huff off indignantly when he performed a hula dance in his long winter underwear. On the darker side, we meet the burly Black policeman, Officer Simms, who enforced law on the notorious East End. Entering into frays "that no white man would have dared approach," he was knifed and left dying in an East End alley. In her chapter on the railroad, she remembers Miss Toohey, an Irish Catholic woman who tended the Lady's room at the train depot for years. She recalls how Miss Toohey kept the waiting room as she kept her own parlor, so circumspectly that no one dared drop a chewing gum wrapper. In addition, Miss Toohey always knew the "real" train schedules and would tell those arriving at the station when the train would arrive and whether it was best they wait there or go home because the train was late.

The book is not only about people, but also about train stations, doctors' practices, high school plays, civil war records, grave markers, architecture, local politics, business practice and competition, library shelves, water towers, and cultural development as perceived by Santmyer. It is her imagination and memory that give all of these disparate elements coherence and meaning in a delicate structure of description, anecdote, history, nostalgia, gossip, and personal reflection. Seemingly no aspect of town life lacks the power to stir evocative memories.

Often, as in Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*, a rush of memories can be triggered by a sensual experience in the present. She is able to revive the church Sundays of her youth by reexperiencing "the smoothness of cherry wood under the fingers, or the smell of rain and wet leaves across a spattered window sill." The sound of a train whistle can also take one "back in time, in the long ago past. Particularly if it sounds at night . . . you are not remembering but being, for a brief instant, a child." For Santmyer there seems to be only a thin line between memory and being, twin dimensions of consciousness and experience.

Finally, landscape and authorial self are reflections of each other—each growing organically, each contributing something essential to the nature of the other. In the mental landscape where "time is the sum of nothing" and a year "will seem to have endured without beginning and without end," one is both sad and pleased. Sad because of what seems lost, pleased in the knowledge that nothing in life is ever really lost. *Ohio Town* is a uniquely American book—perhaps even a minor masterpiece—which, beyond sharing a sensitive writer's responses to her hometown, encourages a reconsideration of the meaning and value of our own experience. ∞

Dennis R. Perry is a doctoral candidate in American literature at the University of Wisconsin.

The Faith of a Critic

by George A. Panichas

James J. Thompson Jr.: *Christian Classics Revisited*; Ignatius Press; San Francisco; $8.95.

The 25 short essays on a variety of "Christian classics" collected in this book originally appeared in the *New Oxford Review* between November 1979 and October 1982. Collected here, in their total economy, James J. Thompson's essays remind us of the maturing legitimacy of the interdisciplinary relations between literature and religion. *Christian Classics Revisited* shows us that these relations need not embarrass us in the way they once embarrassed F.R. Leavis, who wrote in *The Common Pursuit* (1952): "As for Christian Discrimination, it needs to be said that there can be no substitute for the scrupulous and disinterested approach of the literary critic." Paradoxically, the present plight of the critical function probably stems more from the effort to discriminate empirically than to "discriminate Christianly."

So much of contemporary criticism is nihilistic that when one reads Thompson's deeply felt book the experience is both gratifying and refreshing. *Christian Classics Revisited* clearly shows that what we perhaps need more of today is not literary critiques but literary celebrations. The time has come for literary scholars to be more aware of their spiritual obligations. Literary criticism, no less than literature as a whole, has a "need for roots," as Thompson demonstrates. (Even before his own death in 1978, Leavis himself, it is interesting to note here, complained bitterly of "the vacuum of disinheritance" in which modern man lives.)

Christian Classics Revisited also reminds us of what is so manifestly absent from contemporary life: the standards of piety that should give us a true sense of proportion and define the limits of existence. To judge by Thompson's literary and critical orientation, his critical process of selectivity and judgment, his appreciations, his "celebrations," he is *not* the kind of literary academic (or politician) who thrives in the university world and is a luminous presence in the meetings of the Modern Language Association. Bigness and technique—two of our most destructive idols—are what Thompson and his little book contravene. His standards of piety give to his thought and writing the secret of proportion, what the ancient Hellenes called *sophrosyné*, and which Fathers of the Church like Clement of Alexandria rightly fused with the true mission of faith. "Thus philosophy was a preparation, paving the way for the man who is brought to perfection by Christ," Clem-

BOOKS IN BRIEF

***The Social Compulsions of Ideas: Toward a Sociological Analysis of Knowledge* by Gerard Degré; edited by Cyril H. Levitt; Transaction; New Brunswick, NJ; $39.95.** The author attempts to analyze how "socio-historical conditions" determine thought, rather than the other way around. Having performed this labor, the socioanalyst is uniquely qualified to "play a potential role as political mediator, social critic, labor arbitrator, and so on"—sounds like precisely the self-aggrandizing idea a sociologist would come up with.

***Solzhenitsyn in Exile: Critical Essays and Documentary Materials*; edited by John B. Dunlop, *et al.*; The Hoover Institution Press; Stanford, CA; $19.95.** Robert Conquest, Pierra Daix, Georges Nivat, and a dozen other scholars join Solzhenitsyn himself in assessing the varying responses among Western commentators and intellectuals to the author of *Gulag Archipelago*. Solzhenitsyn's courage and integrity make him a man for all seasons, but Conquest rightly suggests that he would not seem larger-than-life if our "self-appointed leaders of opinion" were not such moral midgets. The annotated bibliography is a must for Solzhenitsyn specialists.

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ent writes in *Stromateis*.

There is present throughout Thompson's book an enhancing simplicity of belief and expression, and of the gift of grace itself. In discussing Dorothy Day's *The Long Loneliness*, Thompson quotes these words: "People have so great a need for reverence, to worship, to adore; it is a psychological necessity of human nature." One rarely finds such words written or quoted today, and it is specially valuable that Thompson cites them and simultaneously illustrates them in his celebratory essays. *Christian Classics Revisited* reminds us that there can be no standards of discrimination without standards of piety.

Thompson's critical breviary reveals an unfailing inspiration born of belief. He is able to see things and to make judgments that academic critics *per se* cannot. He establishes between himself and his reader a sincere critical communion, a spiritual rapport, a sympathy of vision. There is so much rot in the realm of critical discourse today, there is so much conscious murder of the Spirit in the classroom and in publications of all sorts, that Thompson's little essays, by comparison, sparkle with the Light of the Word. Is it possible that we have had too much critical play and then too much critical madness? That question kept crossing my mind as I read with joy Thompson's essays on G.K. Chesterton's *Orthodoxy*, Ignazio Silone's *Bread and Wine*, Thomas Merton's *The Seven Storey Mountain*, Karl Barth's *Deliverance to the Captives*. And as I read these essays I realized more than ever that they were the kind of essays that one would hardly find in the book pages of the daily press or in literary quarterlies and critical inquiries. For so long we have been inundated with critical blasphemy of either a neutralist tendency like that of *The New York Times Book Review* or a Marxist taint like that of *The New York Review of Books* that some of us begin to feel like beleaguered souls in no-man's-land.

When Thompson speaks of his own experience in teaching *The Seven Storey Mountain* in a college course on American thought and being met with an angry silence and cruel resentment on the part of his students, he captures that spirit of enmity that is symptomatic of modern existence. And we are reminded that once the seed of corruption has been planted in the soul, and in the state, it is difficult to extricate. We are reminded, too, that the books Thompson talks about are in their own way the forbidden books of the modern age. A regnant orthodoxy of enlightenment has seen to this!

Thompson's essays show a sensitive comprehension of religious awareness and concern, and the books he selects to talk about represent a wide variety of genres—fiction, autobiography, biography, poetry, criticism, drama, letters, sermons. The premise that books, especially Christian-oriented books, "can facilitate the pilgrim's journey through life and can even be the means through which God imparts saving grace to undeserving sinners" informs Thompson's essays. Such a premise is particularly to be welcomed at a time when critical (and life-) principles lack any real definiteness of moral purpose or spiritual grounding. Our social and cultural pluralism inevitably leads to conditions of life and letters that resist and reject religious ideas and teachings; that equalize, sometimes in the most monolithic ways, secular ideas and spiritual essences and make it impossible to perceive a hierarchy of idea and value and to respond in any way to ultimate questions.

"What does it mean to be a Christian? What must one do to be saved?" For Thompson these two questions are of transcendent importance, and he writes his essays out of a deep need to find answers to these questions. His

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recognition of this special need separates him from the critical (and pedagogical) *Zeitgeist* of our time. Modern life remains in the dark shadow of Marxist doctrine, with the stress on economic questions rather than religious questions. In truth, Karl Marx is our Grand Inquisitor, as liberation theology demonstrates with such telling force. Indeed, we have made so much, these days, of the Harvey Coxes and the Hans Küngs that we have tended to forget or to minimize "the theology of crisis" of a Karl Barth or an Emil Brunner, both of whom decipher the state of our true captivity and challenge us to find the true freedom. Thompson's essays on these two theologians help to restore a measure of religious sanity to a rampant theological sentimentalism and romanticism.

What connects the visible life with the invisible life, the temporal with the eternal, is for Thompson a fundamental matter. His essays never fail to reflect on spiritual connections that vivify and shape life. Catholicity of taste, seriousness of intent, and courage of faith inform and enrich his acceptances and affirmations as these emerge from the sincerity and order of the eloquent critical testimony found in the pages of this little book. Even when the didactic strain here is strongly evident, Thompson's sincerity is so radiant that the reader does not resent his evangelical tone. It is surprising and even disappointing to find that Thompson does not include among the writers he celebrates a Fyodor Dostoevski or a Nicholas Berdyaev. The absence of an Eastern Orthodox writer deprives the book of a larger spiritual dimension. Still, the reader need not quibble with the content of *Christian Classics Revisited*; we have an especially urgent need for such a book written by a teacher and critic conscious of "God in search of man."

The spiritual and critical ethos that Thompson celebrates is hardly a popular one. Nor is it the kind that will gain either favor or attention in the popular press. *Christian Classics Revisited* will never command the kind of critical response routinely accorded the sensationalistic and voyeuristic. Given the power of the secular conspiracy, Thompson's book should make us all the more aware of why we now need standards of piety. ∞

George A. Panichas is professor of English at the University of Maryland at College Park and editor of Modern Age.

IN FOCUS

A Stranger to His Kind

by Carl C. Curtis

Donald Spoto: *The Kindness of Strangers*; Little, Brown; Boston; $19.95.

"Poetry," declared T.S. Eliot, "is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not an expression of personality, but an escape from personality." More than one set of eyebrows has arched at that pronouncement. For surely we read in part to know the man behind the work. A blind bard, Demodocus, sings in *Odyssey* VIII, we conclude, because Homer was blind; Micawber lives in the shadow of the poorhouse in *David Copperfield* because Dickens' own father did. Poets are peculiar, and we always delight in hearing the details of their lives. But do we really read Homer or Dickens to discover the intimate struggles and deepest secrets of their past? Eliot was right: as much as we enjoy hearing of our favorite poets' eccentricities, their work must transcend the autobiographic and confessional. We want words and images that order our chaotic perceptions into a decorous, truthful whole. The poet, however fascinating, who fails in this task remains a mere character, a stranger speaking an arcane language that may amuse, captivate, or anger, but cannot teach.

In the last 20 years of his life, Tennessee Williams wrote play after play trying simultaneously to exorcise personal demons and to maintain his standing as the greatest living American playwright. How well he succeeded privately and professionally may be seen both in the continuing torment he suffered and in the bewildered, often caustic, reaction of theatergoers and critics. To the faithful who wanted another *Glass Menagerie*, the new works were incomprehensible; to the aficionados of the *avant-garde* who thrived on the latest shocker, they were flat. By the time of his death in 1983, friends and public alike pitied Williams as much as they admired him.

In his biography of Williams, *The Kindness of Strangers*, Donald Spoto sketches the career of the playwright from birth in Columbus, Mississippi, to death in Key West. Notwithstanding his admiration for his subject, Spoto admits the link of Williams' decline to the sordid habits—liquor, sex, and dope—that absorbed his private and public energies and separated him from the friends and audience he wanted to reach. Spoto's readings of the individual plays become repetitious, and his trendy acceptance of Williams' "sexual preference" fills the reader with loathing. But one message is clear: personal catharsis untranslated into public catharsis spelled Williams' fall as a successful dramatist.

Yet Spoto disappoints in his assessment of the early plays which made Williams' reputation. Spoto would have us believe that Williams was a keen examiner of the verities of human passion and endurance, that *The Glass Menagerie* plumbs the depths of human endurance and fragility, and that *A Streetcar Named Desire* contrasts the romantic, chivalrous South (symbolized in Blanche) with a brutish modernity (seen in Stanley). Certainly, Williams tried to work such ideas into his plays. The trouble was his exhibitionism. "I am more personal in my writing than other people," he said, "and it may have gone against me." Too true. The more audiences learned of his past, the less they thought about human passion and endurance. They only saw Tennessee Williams baring his soul on stage. That's why viewers easily forget that Blanche symbolizes the South, and remember instead that her dead husband killed himself after she exposed his homosexuality. Similarly, audiences miss the pathos of Laura in *The*

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Glass Menagerie, seeing in her plight only the Williamses of Enright Avenue, St. Louis. After all, wasn't Williams a homosexual? Didn't he have an insane sister, a domineering mother, and a philandering father? Poor man. Strange work. But what does it have to do with us? Spoto's failure to deal with this question ultimately makes *The Kindness of Strangers*, like Williams' plays, trivial. cc

Carl Curtis is assistant professor of English at Liberty University.

Revolution and Its Discontents

by Stephen L. Tanner

Conrad Detrez: *A Weed for Burning*; Translated by Lydia Davis; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; San Diego.

Winner of France's Renaudot Prize, this autobiographical *Bildungsroman* is a first-person narrative of a young man from a Belgian village who begins as a seminarian and ends as a disillusioned anarchist. Under the direction of his widowed mother and the village priest, he enters the seminary in Louvain, where his study of the changing values revealed in ecclesiastic history makes him a skeptic. Desiring to serve God in a practical way, he emigrates to Brazil, hoping to do some kind of lay missionary work. Beginning with a Catholic-sponsored labor movement, he gradually becomes embroiled in the pro-Castro revolutionary activities of the mid-60's. Naive about his religion, he is equally naive about politics. Circumstances and acquaintances, rather than examined principles, shape his actions. He is ultimately arrested, cruelly tortured, and deported to Paris.

The leftist habits acquired in South America translate in Paris into participation in student protests and revolutionary antics. He writes a book on guerrilla warfare, but because the young Paris revolutionaries have infected him with anarchism, his leftist organization finds fault with the book and expels him. At 28, aged much beyond his years by homo- and heterosexual promiscuity, physical torture, and the loss of self-identity caused by revolutionary activity, he returns to his village home, left vacant at the death of his mother. There he simply lies down and dies. "My soul had learned everything," he concludes. "It had come to know that God was dead, that revolution crushed the men who made it, that love was impossible. It had paid the highest price to depart."

Nothing palliates the gloomy vision except the motif of plants and gardening. The narrator begins and ends surrounded by the jungle of houseplants cultivated by his mother. Gardens and gardening—representing peace, growth, and fertility—provide refreshing contrast to the garbage and pollution linked with the war and inhumanity that dominate this sparse but vivid novel.

As engaging as the narrative is, the concluding statement is melodramatic. The narrator has not learned everything; in fact, he has learned very little. The transit from religion to revolution to anarchism to suicidal disillusionment has been smooth and inevitable because no obstacles of discipline, thoughtfully embraced principles, or profound commitment to other individuals have hampered the way. A knowledge that God is dead can be poignant only if one has had a vital knowledge of God alive. Perhaps love is impossible for those who seek it in bisexual orgies during Brazilian carnival; yet, millions have found it elsewhere. The tumid concluding statement may evoke pity for a victim of his own naive good intentions, but it cannot be taken seriously as a verdict on the human condition. cc

Stephen Tanner is professor of English at Brigham Young University.

Priam's Daughter

by E. Christian Kopff

Christa Wolf: *Cassandra: A Novel and Four Essays*; Farrar, Straus & Giroux; New York.

Christa Wolf is an East German novelist who delivered several lectures at the West German University of Frankfurt on a work-in-progress focusing on the Trojan seeress, Cassandra. Cassandra survived the sack of Troy to be taken back to Greece by Agamemnon, only to be slain with him by his wife, Clytemnestra. Her novella on this theme and four essays were published separately in West Germany and are here reunited, translated by Jan Van Heurck. *Cassandra* is the story, based on Homer, Aeschylus, Herodotus, and books on Greek mythology and religion, of a young girl who sees her country embark on a suicidal war. Her vocation as Prophetess helps keep her sane, even as she sees her people destroying themselves. In the end she too must die, but she knows that her lover, Aeneas, will save the remnant of her people. The significance of all this for a creative German woman who lived through the 30's and 40's and beyond under Nazism and Communism seems fairly clear.

But puzzlement follows in reading the essays included in the book. Two are parts of a travelogue of a trip to Greece, where the figure of Cassandra begins to haunt Wolf; then comes a diary and a letter to a friend. There is much conventional chatter here about nuclear war, oppression of women, and the fear that science is man-created and therefore inaccessible to any woman not willing to desex herself. Wolf tells us that Cassandra is to be a feminist fable. Since Cassandra is thrown into prison for foretelling the fall of Troy and so opposing the Trojan War and not for any distinctively feminine traits, only two conclusions suggest themselves: either the Intentional Fallacy is alive and well in East Germany, or Wolf is purposely disguising her real intention in a protective leftist haze.

At the heart of the essays lies a profound nostalgia for a past that never existed, a nostalgia of the sort usually thought of as a conservative malady. Wolf visits the island of Crete with two American feminists, and there they discover the land of heart's desire, prehistoric Minoan Crete: "So, once upon a time there really *was* a country where women were free and equal to men. Where women produced the goddesses. (Many male archaeologists and classical scholars find it remarkably difficult to recognize, and then to acknowledge, that all early divinities are female; often, I think, they prefer not to read Engels or Bachofen or Thompson or Robert Graves.)" *Prefer* may be the *mot juste*. The only scholar on this list is Bachofen, whose brilliant speculations on *Mutterrecht* or "matriarchy" have been conclusively refuted by a century of scholarship, conducted by both men and women. Of course, Wolf's favorites are the pious Marxist fundamentalist George Thompson and the fun but absurd Graves. She, a German, prefers to quote and paraphrase these loony Englishmen (along with Velikowsky), instead of the great German scholars of the ancient world.

There is no reference to Eduard Meyer, whose masterful *History of Antiquity* is available in paperback in German. Nor is there any mention of the greatest living student of Greek religion, the brilliant classicist Walter

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Burkert, whose important books on Greek religion are only now being translated into English. Fritz Schachermeyr is cited but once. Does the literary mind prefer silly nonsense to sound research? Tolkien and Housman did not. Does the political conservatism of Meyer and Burkert make them unpalatable? Or is it but one more of the crooked paths the creative imagination must tread in the darkness on the other side of the Berlin Wall? ∞

E. Christian Kopff is professor of classics at the University of Colorado and an editor of Classical Journal.

The Libertarian Temptation

by Christopher Muldor

Freedom and Virtue: The Conservative/Libertarian Debate; Edited by George W. Carey; Intercollegiate Studies Institute/University Press of America; Lanham, MD.

Is it possible for the traditional conservative concern with virtue and the good society to be reconciled with the libertarian emphasis on individual freedom? Should libertarianism be considered part of conservatism, or is it an alien presence? These are some of the crucial questions editor George W. Carey and a variety of conservative and libertarian authors examine in *Freedom and Virtue*.

Setting the terms of this debate is difficult, since conservatives and libertarians, as Carey notes, move in essentially different moral worlds. Most conservatives, true to their Burkean roots, think of man as a *historical* being. The individual exists in the matrix of a plurality of authorities and lives within social traditions. But if conservatives are thus in basic agreement with Wilhelm Dilthey's belief that man reveals himself not through philosophical speculation but through history, libertarians generally adhere to a different view. As John Hospers points out, libertarians decide on the proper course of action by consulting theorems derived from their axioms, not the real world.

Conservatives claim that the degree of individual freedom proposed by libertarians may erode public and private virtue. Libertarians argue that virtuous action cannot be coerced, since an action can only partake of virtue (or vice) if it is freely chosen.

The term "freely chosen" has an

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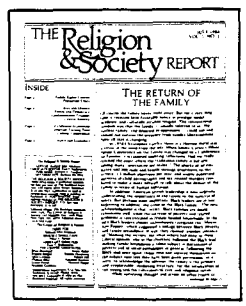

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appealing ring to modern ears, but what exactly does it mean? Virtually everyone would agree that an act performed at gunpoint is neither good nor evil. But the freedom of choice libertarians want is the right to decide upon a course of action after rationally and reflectively considering the alternatives. Frank Meyer, presumably with something like this in mind, declared that every moment in the quest for virtue represents a "new beginning." There is room for objection here, though. Every moment is *not* a new beginning; if it were, it would be almost impossible for a person to achieve coherence of character. As Émile Durkheim made clear a century ago, conduct and character are primarily derived from the internalization of socially prescribed norms.

Consider the case of state-sponsored moral education of the sort suggested by Walter Berns. Despite the arguments of libertarians, there is little ground for viewing such education as necessarily "coercive." How, for instance, is the freedom of a child from the slums reduced by allowing him to judge criminal role models against the teachings of Stoic or Christian philosophy? The conservative attempt to "compel" virtue can therefore be seen for what it is: an effort to foster but not coerce the development of virtuous character.

Traditionalists, of course, do not want the state to bear primary responsibility for promoting virtue; they would prefer to see much of the work done by the "little platoons" that exist between the state and the individual. Many libertarians see traditionalist philosophy as offering less of a barrier to totalitarian ideology than libertarianism. Viewed in the abstract, this claim has some merit: the individual is freer under the axioms of libertarianism than under the structure of traditionalist society. Viewed historically, the claim has no foundation. During the millennia in which the individual lived under the rule of a "plurality of authorities," totalitarianism did not appear; it only emerged once the sway of these authorities was broken in deference to the free, atomized individual.

Libertarians agree with conservatives on some matters: both groups are unalterably hostile to the modern totalitarian state. But any wedding between the two can only produce the ill-begotten progeny of syncretism. cc

Christopher Muldor is a criminologist and writer in Philadelphia.

The Luddite as Messiah

by Herbert London

Jeremy Rifkin: *Declaration of A Heretic*; Routledge & Kegan Paul; London and Boston.

Jeremy Rifkin declares himself a heretic in this book, but he is more accurately described as a Cassandra and not a Huss or a Bruno. This "new age" doomsayer feels romantic impulses and expresses them with poetic skill, but his limited grasp of history, his absurd economic proposals, and his skewed philosophical perspective still show through. According to Mr. Rifkin, "The future of our civilization, our species and our planet now hangs precariously in the balance. The scientific world view and the technologies it has generated have taken our world to the very edge of earthly existence, and now we face the prospect that the future itself might be annulled in our lifetime." What has brought us to this precipice? Rifkin blames the belief in continuing technological advance through science fostered by the Enlightenment philosophers.

Presumably the lust to manipulate the environment, to control every force in nature, has unleashed the process that will destroy the earth as a habitable sphere. For Rifkin, the scientific hubris which aims at "cheating death" will actually result in necrophilia. Many readers, though, will question Rifkin's analysis. The Enlightenment was not, as he alleges, exclusively the work of positivists, and the power science has given man over nature has often proved beneficial rather than insidious. Although Rifkin devotes considerable attention to the horrors of nuclear weaponry, he has nothing to say about the possibility that technological developments such as the Strategic Defense Initiative may lessen the threat of holocaust. The notion that science creates evil needs nuancing that Rifkin does not provide. Descartes, Newton, Locke, Smith, and Darwin are all cast as villains on the scantiest reading of their works.

Rifkin argues inferentially that the rationalists who sought control over nature set the stage for the frightening developments in nuclear energy and bioengineering. Newtonian physics may have created the illusion that all aspects of life can be explained by science. But the successors to Newton discovered a very different vision. Einstein argued that the highest form of science is religion. Heisenberg discussed the uncertainty principle and the role of "indeterminacy" in physical conditions. Quantum physicists apply the laws of space, unreflected light, and zero gravity to challenge Newtonian principles. And modern biologists don't discuss probability in evolution as much as chance and randomness. However, those scientific developments that don't square with the Rifkin vision are ignored.

Mankind has always been subject to the temptation of Promethean pride. What may be different today is the permanence and deadliness of the consequences resulting from such pride. But it is not true that "every initiative we undertake to resolve the crisis of our own survival appears only to exacerbate and deepen the crisis and brings us closer to our own extinction."

Endowed with the ability to reflect upon the past and to consider the future, humanity has not been reduced to the desperation of lemmings. In the face of danger we can still make changes, consider alternatives, and seek solutions, some of them technological. As Justice Hand once argued, "Every accident is in search of a rescue." Rifkin, however, views technological change as the "great abyss" from which there is no turning back.

In his discussion of genetic engineering, Rifkin argues that tampering with biological chemistry through recombinant genetics will destroy the integrity of species and lead inevitably to a biological catastrophe as horrendous as nuclear war. Admittedly, there are ecological risks associated with this research, but every scientist in the field is aware of them. Moreover, recombinant genetics exist in nature; genes combine and recombine as part of evolution's ebb and flow. To suggest that what is done in a laboratory is always malevolent and what is done in nature is invariably salutary is sentimental romanticism. Rifkin simply glosses over the possible benefits of genetic engineering. A rodent with human cancer cells injected into it may be neither pure mouse nor human, but this mixed breed can help to unlock the secrets of a cancer cure. Who is going to say to a cancer patient that this research is going to destroy the rodent species? Who will tell the parents of children with Tay Sachs disease that it is better for people to endure misery than to permit genetic research?

Every technology does alter our relationship to nature. While we pay a price for change, we also live with the benefits technology offers, including

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the benefits of nuclear energy and biological engineering. Rifkin believes that "instead of using knowledge to increase our rule over, we might just as easily use knowledge to become a partner with the rest of the earthly creation." What this means is never spelled out. Does Rifkin mean, for instance, that polio microbes should remain undisturbed by Salk vaccine?

Rifkin's simplistic "empathetic approach" to science is riddled with inconsistencies and telling omissions. While Rifkin argues for "the sacredness of life before all other considerations," he somehow neglects to say *anything* against abortion. Once mankind sees itself as an "indivisible whole" in which every living thing is accountable to every other living thing for its existence, "war will become obsolete." No matter that collectivist movements in this century have been remarkably bloody. Rifkin sees Gandhi as the avatar of "group consciousness" and natural harmony. Yet in crediting Gandhi with bringing "the Empire to its knees" through his "respect for the sanctity of life," Rifkin fails to discuss why passive disobedience could win concessions from the British but could do nothing to mitigate the bloody religious war between Hindus and Moslems.

My guess is that Rifkin will suffer the fate of other prophets who win celebrityhood by publicizing their formula for saving the world. Who, after all, now knows or cares about the whereabouts of Charles Reich or Theodore Roszak?

Herbert London is dean of the Gallatin Division of New York University.

REVISIONS

Between Conquistadors and Commissars

Mexican poet Octavio Paz is the rare Latin American writer who does not carry a banner for some revolutionary political movement. Author of *The Bow and the Lyre*, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, and other widely acclaimed works, Paz has apparently decided to pass up his chance for the Nobel. In his latest book of cultural and political commentary, *One Earth, Four or Five Worlds: Reflections on Contemporary History* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; San Diego; $14.95), Paz assesses the modern world —Latin America, Europe, the United States, and the Soviet Union—with remarkable insight and independence from political orthodoxy of every stripe.

Professing allegiance to neither political party nor religious creed, Paz writes simply from the perspective of "an independent writer from Latin America." His observations are "not theory, but testimony." Surveying contemporary Latin America, Paz calls for "changes and reforms, at once radical and in accord with the tradition of each people." Yet finding an inspiring and appropriate model for these necessary changes proves difficult. In the Soviet Union, he sees a totalitarian despotism threatened with petrification or explosion. Western Europe is free, yet stagnates in the "politics of complacency," aiming at nothing more than "another year of tranquil digestion," content with "a prosperity without grandeur . . . and a hedonism without passion and without risks." In Europe's radical terrorism and its gullible pacifism, Paz sees but "two contrary expressions of the same nihilism."

Convinced that democracy is "the least bad" form of government, Paz admires the political achievements of the United States and marvels at its remarkable capacities for self-renewal. But for a number of reasons, Paz doubts that Latin America can or should model itself after the U.S. Whatever natural attraction Latin Americans might feel toward their northern neighbor has been seriously eroded by the willingness of American politicians and businessmen to prop up archaic social and political structures quite different from those found in America. Paz finds American hegemony far less oppressive than Soviet imperialism (the U.S., he points out, has never reduced any country to the misery of Soviet-manipulated Cuba), but Latin resentment of American dominance and intervention is still widespread.

Beyond the tensions of power politics, Paz points to the cultural and religious differences separating Latin America and the U.S. Hispano-American peoples, Paz observes, are tied to the past, while "the conquest of the future is the United States' tradition." Indeed, Paz cites as the great failure of American intellectual life its complete separation of morality and history, except in isolated groups such as the Southern Fugitives. Because religion is the "hidden taproot" of life in the U.S., Paz believes that American democracy is the direct offspring of the Reformation. In contrast, Latin American democracy struggles to survive because "there was no religious revolution to pave the way for political revolution." And while Latin America tries to find its way to modern democracy, the United States appears to be losing—as part of the general repudiation of the past—the religious heritage that made democracy workable. In the U.S., Paz fears that the experiment in privatizing religion is failing and that the country is being "eaten away by doubt, undermined by a suicidal hedonism, and dazed by the ranting of demagogues."

Paz affirms his hopes for a democratic future for Latin America, although the presence of Cuban and Soviet agents in Nicaragua unsettles him. He fears that he is seeing yet another country traveling the path followed by "other revolutions that have ended in totalitarian petrification," and he wonders why so few intellectuals and journalists in Mexico, Europe, and the U.S. share his concern. It is a strange world—or a strange set of four or five worlds—in which an agnostic Mexican poet sounds a solitary warning against the collapse of faith and against communist aggression while leading American clergymen turn their backs on sin and apostasy so that they can make pilgrimages to the newest workers' paradise. cc

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ART

William Morris in Tokyo

by Shehbaz H. Safrani

Mingei: Japanese Folk Art, an exhibition consisting of 115 paintings, sculptures, ceramics, furniture, lacquers, toys, and other artifacts, opened at the Brooklyn Museum on July 12 and remained on display through September 30, 1985. Most of the art of Japan is imbued with simplicity, directness, and a tremendous sense of design. Japanese work in the visual arts of Japan, sustained over many generations, has led many non-Orientals to consider them as highly decorative people. In fact, the Japanese have never recognized a basic distinction between art (painting, sculpture, and architecture) and craft (ceramics, metalwork, furniture, and textiles).

In the West, by comparison, the guilds that began organizing under ecclesiastical aegis in medieval times created a distinct class of artisans. With the European Renaissance, there emerged the ideal of the artist as a unique individual divinely inspired and talented, who was very different from ordinary craftsmen. Fortunately, this ideal still persists today. No sensible Italian, for example, considers the celebrated designer Gucci, based in Florence, an artist. On the other hand, the eminent contemporary Italian painter, Pietro Annigoni, who also makes Florence his home, is recognized as an artist.

It is surprising that a people as class-conscious as the Japanese did not distinguish between craftsmen and artists until the distinction was introduced to Japan from the West in the late 19th century. Closed to foreigners from 1639 until Commodore Perry forced its reopening in 1853-54 and initiated the Meiji Restoration (1855-68), Japan had nothing like the Western concept of art as something distinct from skilled craftsmanship. To accommodate the Western view of the arts, the Japanese coined two new words—*bijutsu* for "art" and *geijutsu* meaning "the fine arts"—in the early 1870's.

But after Perry's reopening Japan, the incredibly rapid industrialization and Westernization of Japan nearly destroyed traditional Japanese crafts. They were saved from oblivion at the last moment largely through the efforts of one man, Yanagi Sōetsu (1889-1961). Yanagi, a philosopher turned literary and art critic, founded the Crafts Movement in Japan, inspired by William Morris' Art and Crafts Movement in England. Noting that there was no word in Japanese for folk art, Yanagi invented one in the early 1920's: *mingei*, "the art of the common people." In 1926, Yanagi and his friends founded the Japan Folk Art Association (Nihon Mingei Kyokai), which now has its own museums in Tokyo, Kurashiki, Tottori, and Osaka.

The gray eminence of the recent show at the Brooklyn Museum turned out to be an astute American, Stewart Cutlin (1858-1929). It was largely due to his farsightedness that the museum acquired such an extensive collection of *mingei*. Designed by the famous architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White and constructed in 1897, the Brooklyn Museum is unique among American museums in being able to assemble such a comprehensive exhibition of Japanese folk art from its own permanent collection. The museum's Curator of Asian Art, Robert Moes, active in promoting his department's acquisitions, is gaining a wide reputation on the strength of shows such as *Mingei*.

Cutlin served as the museum's indefatigable Curator of Ethnology from 1902 to 1928. He purchased Japanese folk art at the source during two collecting trips to Japan in 1909 and 1913-14. At that time, Westernization had not yet destroyed all the old ways, especially out in the countryside. (Striking black and white photographs of traditional agrarian scenes were intelligently integrated into the recent exhibition.) Since the early 1970's, the Brooklyn Museum has prudently sought to fill the gaps in the Japanese folk art collection originated by Cutlin through systematic purchases and through the donation of *mingei* pieces from munificent collectors.

The brilliance of the *Mingei* exhibition is representative of the change for the better that the Brooklyn Museum has taken under the stewardship of Robert T. Buck, its new director. Buck's work has earned him kudos and more kudos from leading art critics. Before Buck assumed the directorship, the Brooklyn Museum was filled with the "organized clutter" of a moribund Victorianism. Today, the museum is uncluttered, clean, and intelligently reorganized. Former labyrinths have been removed and refurbished with taste and acclaimed works of art better displayed, yet the museum's soul has been untouched. Nowhere is the quiet dynamism of the Buck administration more noticeable than in the rotating gallery, used for traveling and temporary shows such as the *Mingei*.

The Brooklyn Museum presented *Mingei* as subtly as tea is in Japan. But given its Brooklyn location, *Mingei* turned out to be the best of two worlds. Its success, unlike that of blockbuster art shows of late, was established on individual rapport rather than on media blitz. In adopting such a dignified and restrained approach, Robert Buck seems to be emulating the tradition of Sherman Lee, the brilliant and demanding retired director of the Cleveland Museum. In a long and eventful career, during which he advised such eminent collectors as the late John D. Rockefeller III (founder of New York's Asia Society), Lee simply shunned blockbuster art exhibitions. Very few Americans have heard about or read *The New Golden Land: European Images of America From the Discoveries to the Present Time*, by

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Hugh Honour. But that is how Lee celebrated the Bicentennial in 1976 at his Cleveland Museum!

Visitors entering the *Mingei* exhibition were greeted by a solemn, 51-inch granite Buddhist sculpture of Kannon Bosatsu, the most merciful and most popular of Buddhist deities in Japan. With hands clasped together in the Buddhist practice of greeting and showing reverence, eyes closed in meditation, the elegant sculpture set the mood of quiet repose. Commoners in Japan practice both Buddhism and their indigenous faith of Shintoism. Like any people, Japanese commoners also have a sense of humor. This also became evident in a few pieces with exaggerated physiognomy—works of innocent lampooning, one might say.

In the low-ceilinged rectangular main gallery, works of art were supported on pedestals set upon a dark floor covering. All of the exhibits were displayed with immense concern for the overall design and visual effect. The visitor's line of vision, however, was arrested by two glass cases located in the center of the gallery. Inside these horizontal and rectangular showcases, concealed lighting illuminated smaller works of art, some quite familiar.

Iwazaru (the ubiquitous "Speak No Evil" monkey), for example, is a nine-inch seated simian in Japanese cypress, best known to most Americans through cheap souvenirs imported from Japan before World War II. The *Iwazaru*, like all other works of art in the *Mingei* exhibition, was executed by anonymous craftsmen. An ability to economize lines without jeopardizing forms—human, animal, or geometric—has long been the hallmark of Japanese folk art. In Manhattan's *kitsch* shops, I have seen the latest Japanese quartet of simians. The fourth monkey is a new addition: holding its nose, it can "Smell No Evil"! Such is the hilarious response of Japanese folk artists to the air pollution so prevalent in their country as well as ours.

The few suggestions of color in the show were to be found in the textiles, including coats of firemen, the livery coats of workmen, and shop curtains. Unusual, too, were the kimonos shown here. Unmistakably coarse and simple, they conveyed the feeling of quiet dignity with which the common Japanese live. The earthy vitality found in many of the *mingei* pieces forced one to remember that the elite in Japan commissioned a very different sort of art, renowned for its flamboyance and flair. Still, in charm and sweetness, the folk art of the *Mingei* show transcended the pedestrian. Between 1800 and 1910, Japanese commoners managed to avoid the monotony of uniform dress and color now found in so many socialist regimes. This is no mean achievement for anonymous craftsmen and the commoners who patronized them. Bound within a narrow geography, limited in their natural resources, drained of their energy by internecine wars and military adventures abroad, perceived solely as entrepreneurs, the Japanese have lately been perceived as being distant and even cold.

Okame; Meiji period, 19th century. Painted papier mâché mask. Gift of Dr. & Mrs. John Lyden. Photo courtesy of The Brooklyn Museum.

Karashishi; Edo period; 19th century. Roof tile, gray pottery. Gift of Dr. Fred S. Hurst. Photo courtesy of The Brooklyn Museum.

What visitors garnered from the *Mingei* exhibition was another image of the Japanese, as a people relaxed, isolated perhaps, but very much within the family of man. Electricity, kerosene, and propane, Mr. Buck declared in his preface to the show's catalog, have taken the place of wood, charcoal, and candles. Small wonder that the Japanese have had to gravitate to themselves as they have redefined the substrata of their folk art. No other nation recognizes each leading artistic creator as a "National Living Treasure." Two such Living Treasures earned their renown through breakthroughs in making bronze bells and paper.

The commonplace in art need not be trite. What can be said about how *Okame*, the Goddess of Mirth (see photograph), emerged as one of the most delightful characters in Japanese folklore? Papier-mâché, like many other mediums, came naturally to the Japanese craftsmen. Though devoid of Oriental dragons and beasts, the glazed stoneware seen in the *Mingei* exhibition suggested how even jars for storing tea were made with the inimitable quality of Japanese ceramics. The most outstanding terra-cotta on display was of *Karashishi*, "mythical lion," once used as a roof tile (see photograph). Having learned of lions only through hearsay, the Japanese gave their fantasy free reign in depicting these fearsome beasts. Among the superb examples of *mingei* furniture was a chest of drawers on wheels, designed to be easily moved in case of fire. Prudence aside, visitors could only admire the chest's flamelike grain, finished to a glowing orange-brown color.

The last room of the exhibition, like the proverbial end of a burning candle, suddenly came alive. Here, in a very limited space, were Ainu textiles and artifacts. The Ainu, whose art bears a certain resemblance to that of

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the American Indians of the Northwest, are aborigines living on Hokkaido, the large northern island of the Japanese archipelago. The objects displayed, though of types dating from the late Edo (1615-1868) and Meiji (1868-1912) periods, were executed roughly between 1800-1910. The Ainu designs of elongated C's, S's, U's, half O's are forceful reminders that more visionary explorers like Thor Heyerdahl are needed. Such designs occur on tiny Ainu stirrers and tobacco pipes but are best seen in their textiles. Awed by their art, I wondered if one people had in fact been dispersed on two continents. If so, did they cross from the Bering Strait or sail across the Pacific? In any event, as far back as the 1800's, John Batchelor (a missionary among the Ainu for over 50 years) noted sadly that the traditional Ainu way of life was in decline and that the Ainu themselves were a fast disappearing people!

Robert Moes of the Brooklyn Museum curated the *Mingei* show and wrote its catalog, which is fully illustrated in black and white with a few color photographs. Copies of the catalog may be obtained for $14.95 from the Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11238. ∞

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STAGE

Class Acts

by Caroline Morgan

Curse of the Starving Class; Written by Sam Shepard; Directed by Robin Lynn Smith; Presented by Patricia Daily and Arthur Master Productions, Inc.; The Promenade Theatre; New York.

There is a kind of unity in Sam Shepard's career—as dramatist and actor—that seems the result more of art than of chance. A new staging of his 1977 play *Curse of the Starving Class* gives us a rare opportunity to look back. Bradley Whitford, who plays the son Wesley, even looks like a younger Sam Shepard. With Wesley's sensitivity and proclivity to moral outrage, it is easy to imagine him growing up to become another Shepard. Wesley's more adventurous tendencies, such as his flights of fancy in the model airplanes banked across his ceiling, also provide an early glimpse into the Sam Shepard who played Chuck Yeager so convincingly in *The Right Stuff*.

The passion and emotional depth of the father Weston wells up again in Shepard's more recent drama *Fool for Love*. In this dramatic piece of theater, the motley kitchen of *Curse* becomes a tawdry motel room at the edge of a desert. The two lovers grapple with each other and the power of their passion just as the family in *Curse* must defy and yet define the bloody knot of family ties.

Shepard's most obsessive thematic concerns include the corrosive effects of plutocratic "progress" on the American family. In *Curse* a land developer is slowly but inevitably acquiring the small farms that surround the family's land. Although the son makes a naive attempt to rally the family to action, his efforts are ridiculed by his alcoholic father, avaricious mother, and self-centered adolescent sister. His hunger and desperation drive him to slaughter the lamb that we finally understand was marked for sacrifice from the very beginning.

Shepard says a lot about families in this play, especially about the violent love that lies at the heart of family conflict. Through dramatic action such as *Curse* and in the parts he has chosen to play in movies like *Country*, Shepard seems to be telling us that the American family remains a kind of impossible necessity.

Shepard expresses the paradox in beautifully crafted poetic language. While the son's opening soliloquy remains structurally weak in the context of the play, the words bring close to home the drunken father in his reckless car, with lines such as "headlights goin' back to black." Sam Shepard's poetic potential has been fulfilled in later works such as *Fool for Love*, and it was an exciting experience to see that talent beginning to blossom.

Kathy Bates and Karen Tull star in Curse of the Starving Class. *Photo by Carol Rosegg, Martha Swope Associates.*

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New York provided another comment on "progress" in a concurrent exhibition of photographs and etchings at The Donnell Center of the New York Public Library. These depictions of ornamental manhole covers are the work of an indomitable photographer, Hertha Bauer. Featured in *The Guinness Book of Records* for her 1,200 photographs of such covers, Bauer celebrates the art of the idiosyncratic working class.

She hopes to collect at least one example of every design on New York's manhole covers before the city, busy as ever, replaces them with "more practical" identical covers. Through Bauer's photographs, generations of artisans and artists bring their message of symmetry, poignancy, and humor to anyone who bothers to glance down at the world of beauty beneath our feet. cc

Caroline Morgan writes on the arts in New York.

Photo by Hertha Bauer, 1985.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter From Mongolia

by Ewa M. Thompson

Going First Class From Karakorum to Moscow

In August-September 1985, I traveled as a faculty lecturer with a group of Rice University alumni on a journey from Mongolia to Moscow by way of Siberia. The trip began in the village of Khujirt near Genghis-Khan's capital of Karakorum. From there we went northwest to the God-forsaken Ulan-Ude and the capital of Eastern Siberia, Irkutsk, and then westward to Krasnoyarsk, famous for its labor camps and more recently for the radar installations. Next came the matchbox city of Novosibirsk and its designer version, Akademgorodok, then Omsk (where Fyodor Dostoevski spent four years in hard labor for political crimes), Tyumen, and Sverdlovsk. Appropriately, we traveled across the Urals in the darkness of the night so that no one could take pictures of the landscape in which the Soviets make the bomb. Finally came Andrei Sakharov's home of Gorky, and then the centers of the empire: Moscow and Leningrad.

More than seven centuries ago, a similar journey was undertaken by the Mongol horsemen who beat all records in the speed with which they moved across the enormous Siberian plains and established an empire. It covered the territory of the present-day Soviet Union, and its hallmarks were contempt for the individual, glorification of the state, and a drive to unify the world under the scepter of the Khans. At that time, Moscow paid homage to the Mongols; now, it is the other way around.

Even in Mongolia there remain few traces of Genghis Khan, the Emperor of All Men, and of his powerful heirs. The great Mongol victory over the principality of Rus (the grandmother of Mother Russia) with its capital of Kiev is barely mentioned in the museums of Ulan Bator. Moscow does not wish to remind its former masters of their days of glory. Those Mongolians to whom I spoke seemed not to know that seven centuries ago the territory of the present-day Soviet Union had its capital not in Moscow, but in the vast valley near Khujirt, now home to sheep and horses.

Two centuries later, the Mongols withdrew, and the Russians took over Siberia. In some ways, not much has changed in this part of the world. Siberia is immense passivity, unwashed faces, uncombed hair, and

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dull expression on human faces. It is thousands of miles of rolling hills of monotonous beauty. It is archaic wooden houses without plumbing. But there is electricity, and TV antennas decorate many a cottage.

In the 13th century, Southern Siberia was dotted with staging posts which enabled the Khans to maintain a good intelligence and communication system in their empire. Today, Southern Siberia is still a huge military camp whose few transport routes are tightly controlled. In remote areas we saw grass-covered ammunition dumps, trains carrying tanks, machine guns, and other military equipment. Along the 300-mile paved road from Ulan-Ude to Irkutsk, I saw not a single car, only army vehicles and trucks carrying unidentifiable cargo. I saw virtually no cars or private vehicles anywhere in Siberia, except in big cities such as Irkutsk and Novosibirsk. The evident emphasis in Siberia on the military, contrasted with Gorbachev's smiling peace offensive, made me think of the unflattering description of the inhabitants of Karakorum offered in the 13th century by the friar John de Piano Carpini:

> [They] are the greatest liars in the world in dealing with other people, and hardly a true word escapes from their mouths. Initially they flatter, but in the end they sting like scorpions. They are crafty and sly, and wherever possible they try to get the better of everybody else by false pretenses. If they intend some mischief against others they have an admirable ability to keep their intentions secret, so that others cannot take any precautions or countermeasures against their clever plans.

In *The Mortal Danger*, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn asserts that "[prerevolutionary Russia] with her many nationalities, knew no deportations of entire peoples and no armed separatist movements. . . . Camps there were none; the very concept was unknown." Yet in Irkutsk, one of the few architectural sights is *Polskiy Kostyol*, a Roman Catholic church built by 20,000 Polish men who were imprisoned there for taking part in the 1863 uprising against the Russians. In *God's Playground*, Norman Davies has described how these unfortunates made their long journey to Siberia "packed into cattle trucks or shackled together in long lines, slowly trudging across the tundra to camps and prisons in the most distant fastnesses of the Empire." The church served the Siberian Catholic exiles until the October Revolution. It is now used as an office building and a concert hall. Its pseudo-Gothic style contrasts sharply with the nearby Orthodox church and with 19th-century wooden cottages which still house many inhabitants of Irkutsk.

For two centuries now, the Russian population of Siberia has been subsidized by Moscow to stimulate Russification of the area. This goal has been largely accomplished along the southern border of the empire. "The might of Russia is centered in Siberia," proclaims a huge slogan in the Siberian research center of Akademgorodok. It echoes Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's exhortation in *From Under the Rubble*: "The Northeast reminds us that we, the Russians, are the Northeast of the planet . . . but we have no more than two or three decades . . . [to make these areas truly ours]: [later on], world population explosion will take them away from us."

Huge industrial enterprises which I saw scattered along the Siberian route and in European Russia contrast sharply with the monumental inertness of the Russian people I met. There seemed to be no active dissatisfaction, and obedience to the authorities was taken for granted.

John de Piano Carpini: "In the whole world there are to be found no more obedient subjects than the Tartars. . . . They pay their lords more respect than any other people. . . . They regard each other almost as members of one family and . . . are accustomed to deprivation."

While standing in line at the Museum of Religion and Atheism in Leningrad, I engaged in a conversation with those around me. One woman asked: "Why are you Americans so stubborn, why won't you give in?" I decided that getting arrested for anti-Soviet propaganda was not my idea of spending the afternoon and replied that perhaps the line was not an appropriate place to discuss such matters. "You are right," said the woman, "*it is not for us* to discuss such matters."

Russian efforts to propagandize our tour were less heavy-handed than they have been on previous visits. Gone are the grim Intourist guides of yore who sounded like rural Party propagandists. Today, Intourist personnel wear Western clothes and joke about *Gorky Park*, Hedrick Smith's *The Russians*, and the possibility of being shipped off to Siberia. They speak excellent English and are familiar with American idiom. In Novosibirsk, we heard of the "satellite town" of Akademgorodok, and the Lake Baikal region was declared to be "one vast recreational area." Fine-tuning of PR goes so far as to make Intourist guides wear their wedding bands on the left hand (normally, Russians wear them on the right hand) and to assign "typically Russian" first names to them such as Natasha, Boris, Alex, and so forth (I discovered by accident that our train conductor's real name was Filemon but he told us to call him Vladimir).

John de Piano Carpini: "The Tartars fight more by stratagem than by sheer

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Liberalism in the Classical Tradition **by Ludwig von Mises; Foundation for Economic Education; Irvington-on-Hudson, NY.** A reprint of the 1927 classic of the Austrian school, Mises' tract argues for pure liberalism: economic freedom, toleration of diversity, and peaceful free trade. A welcome corrective in this era of rampant statism, classical liberalism never could come to grips with the reality of family and nation. "For liberalism is, from the very outset, a world-embracing political concept"—which explains the totalitarian accent sometimes heard in this radical insistence on freedom.

Consensus and Conflict: Essays in Political Sociology **by Seymour Martin Lipset; Transaction; New Brunswick, NJ.** This second volume of Lipset's essays are devoted to social and political conflict and the social and political mechanisms for maintaining consensus—useful Weberian analyses of American political conflicts, occasionally flawed by sweeping assumptions about America's distinctive equalitarianism and contempt for authority.

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force."

The contempt of Russian officials toward us, the starry-eyed and monolingual American tourists, was very much in evidence. (I could detect no such contempt among the non-Russian Soviets I met during the journey.) We were treated as suckers in restaurants and hotels, in concert halls (where shoddy performances were scheduled for several hundred foreign tourists at a time), and at airports. Rude comments about us were exchanged in Russian by Intourist personnel. When I asked the receptionist at a Moscow hotel for help with lost luggage, our Intourist guide interrupted me and told the receptionist not to bother because I could take care of the matter myself by going to the airport. At meals, we were repeatedly refused the second cup of coffee or tea "because we paid for 100 grams of each only." Requests for bottled or boiled water invariably met with, "Who will pay for it?" Our American guide was more than generous in paying extra for everything, but even so we were consistently shortchanged on both service and food.

Fra Carpini: "They are mean and greedy, and if they want something, they will not stop begging and asking for it, until they have got it. They cling fiercely to what they have and in making gifts they are extremely miserly."

According to official figures, Russians comprise slightly less than half of the present population of the Soviet Union (137 out of 275 million). Yet a visitor is shielded from any contacts with the non-Russians except through folklore or handicrafts whose origin and meaning are explained by Russian-speaking guides. One gets an impression that a major PR campaign has been launched in the Soviet Union to wipe out national cultures and replace them by folk dances, songs, and crafts of a particular ethnic region. From Mongolia to Moscow, we were treated to an endless display of folk music and art from various republics, handicrafts displayed in ethnographical museums, and the like. Amidst the dazzling display of colors and costumes, it was easy to forget that national cultures rely little on such paraphernalia and quite a bit on the life of the mind.

Only Russian culture is exempt from the monopoly of the lowest common denominator. Contacts with the West can take place only through Russians. In Mongolia, we met a visiting Moldavian folk ensemble. Our efforts to establish independent contact ended with the Russian head of the ensemble stepping forward and professing to represent the Moldavian youngsters. The suppression includes a ban on translations of any foreign work into any language spoken in the Soviet Union if no Russian translation of this work exists. It is little wonder that the equation of the Russians and the Soviets is evident even in Mongolia. An educated Mongolian told me: "We don't like those people from the north, but what can we do? We are afraid of them."

Fra Carpini: "It is their intention to overthrow the whole world and reduce it to slavery."

In the 19th century, the Russian philosopher Vladimir Soloviëv wrote ironically: "Panmongolism! The word is wild, but I like the way it sounds." In 1918, the Russian poet Aleksandr

Announcing . . .

A Major Work on

Genocide & Terrorism in Ukraine:

Ewald Ammende's ***Human Life in Russia*** is the long unavailable history of the "*Hidden Holocaust*" and the cover-up which prevented news of the starvation of nearly 7,000,000 Ukrainians from being reported in the West during 1931-1934. Ammende, a professional humanitarian whose career is markedly similar to that of Raoul Wallenberg a decade later, gathered eyewitness testimony on the Famine as a means of exposing the awful truth of the genocide and terrorism then occurring in Ukraine.

As such, his work is one of the earliest histories of the *Gulag*, wherein the *Archipelago* consisted of an entire nation to be punished for its opposition to totalitarianism. *Human Life in Russia* has long been unobtainable; we make it available with the hope that the lesson of the Ukrainian Famine will not be lost on our times. The book, 330 pages in a cloth binding and striking jacket, is well illustrated and documented; it belongs in every collection of books on the U.S.S.R. and Ukraine.

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Blok thus addressed the West: "There are millions of you. But we are a horde that cannot be counted. And now the time has come. . . . You must stoop before Russia—the Sphinx; for if you do not . . . we have nothing to lose, and treachery is our weapon." In one of his most publicized poems, the 20th-century Soviet Russian poet Vladimir Mayakovsky said, "An individual is a zero, he is sheer nonsense."

"What does the Red Star symbolize?" asked an amiable Rice alumnus during a city tour. "The five continents," answered the Intourist guide without hesitation. cc

Ewa M. Thompson is professor of German and Russian at Rice University.

Letter From New England

by Philip Terzian

The Modesty of a New Yorker

I may be the only person in America —I am certainly the only one in New England—who did not mourn the recent passing of E.B. White. Of course, I don't mean to say I celebrated his death. On the contrary, I was horrified by the *New York Times*' obituary, which began with the brutal, if unassailable, fact that the sage of North Brooklyn "died of Alzheimer's disease"—an uncharacteristically clinical detail, and hardly necessary. At 86, people are entitled to die "peacefully" or "after a long illness."

No, I respectfully decline to join the encomiastic chorus that has sung him to his rest. Celebrities are often done in by their friends, and E.B. White was no exception. They came to overpraise him, and they buried him in the process. He was an amiable colleague with a minimalist's gift for fables, pointed epistles, and the occasional breezy essay. But the repeated assertions of gentleness, good humor, preciousness (not precocity), gentleness again, fast friendship, down-home judgment, and even more gentleness finally took their toll.

E.B. White was not a literary figure so much as a theatrical phenomenon, and like James O'Neill, who was trapped in a lifetime's performance of *The Count of Monte Cristo*, he played the same role too many times. Mr. White was the kindly gray moustache who fed his geese and calved his cow while the ancient Underwood sat patiently in the background. His rustic imagery, his monosyllabic wisdom and earnest disinterest were all too carefully contrived to be persuasive. He seems to have been unable to distinguish between his well-advertised modesty and an obvious, sometimes overweening, pride. Like Gen. MacArthur's ribbonless uniform, his self-conscious simplicity was a form of ostentation. All those letters to the *New York Herald Tribune*, gently prodding while viciously condemning, were written by someone who knew they would be printed and read, and perhaps even reprinted if not reread.

He was a writer, but what is the substance of his reputation? His obituaries dwelt on his deeply rooted belief in world government, expressed early and often. This is likely to earn him a place in the United World Federalists' Hall of Fame, but that would apply to all manner of crackpot visionaries and single-taxers. Alas, the world is full of Henry Wallaces; the names have been changed, but the sentences remain the same. As a *New Yorker* editor, Mr. White was a connoisseur of sentences, all right, but how many dead editors enjoy a posthumous fame beyond Sixth Avenue? Maxwell Perkins, Saxe Commins, Harold Ross—giants in their day, I suppose, but the sands of time erase their footprints soon enough.

He wrote two famous children's books, one of which jerked an easy tear with the heroine's protracted death. Like most stories of its kind, *Charlotte's Web* was really directed at adults. I have been interested to observe that the parents who have written so movingly about reading it aloud to their children always mention that it was they who wept, not their audience. Children are wise in ways we don't always expect and often see things clearly for what they are.

E.B. White had a real gift for necrology. Some of his best-quoted phrases come from postmortem salutes to fallen *New Yorker* idols. Of course, one's taste for such literature is a matter of choice; but with two or three exceptions, I have never really believed that the death of one *New Yorker* scribe diminishes us all. It may be hard to believe, but those gentle tributes to modest habits occasionally fall on deaf ears. (Visitors will be reminded of this when they stroll through Strawberry Fields, New York's horticultural monument to John Lennon.)

And then there is *The Elements of Style*, another man's book rewritten to teach putative writers how to write like E.B. White. By then, he must have believed what he read about himself! It was the late 1950's, the old *New Yorker* crowd was swiftly passing, and the tributes were beginning to outnumber the reviews. His flesh was weighted down by the Gold Medal of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the National Medal for Literature, and a special citation from the Pulitzer Prize people. His spirit was undoubtedly refreshed by his membership in the National Institute of Arts and Letters and his Fellowship of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was, he had become, the poet laureate of modesty. The epistles were shot off to the *New York Times* instead of the *Trib*, but the message was familiar: "I have retired to the Maine woods (like another famous American writer), and have managed to convert retreat into advance. Look on my letters to the editor, ye Mighty, and despair."

And then he was dead. A famous career, an exalted reputation—but the lone and level sands stretch far away. One of the lessons of celebrity is that the engines of self-promotion can lend substance to the slightest of material. It is tempting, but it is ultimately dangerous. E.B. White is often quoted but seldom read, and when this generation of subscribers is gone, the quotations may disappear, too. cc

Philip Terzian is an editorial writer at the Hartford Courant.

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Letter From the Lower Right

by John Shelton Reed

Odds and Ends From Here and There

The last couple of years have been busy ones, here in the South. Mississippi finally ratified the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, giving women the vote. At Billy Bob's, in Fort Worth, Merle Haggard stood all 5,095 customers to drinks. And in Hardwick, Georgia, Daniel Sargent, 27, a one-legged and legally blind diabetic armed robber, escaped from a state prison by climbing over a 12-foot fence. (He was captured, according to newspaper reports, "within yards" of the institution.)

In the course of a single trip, an Amtrak Miami-to-New York train hit and killed a woman running on the tracks in Georgia, smashed a pickup truck in South Carolina, and plowed into a flatbed truck in North Carolina. Maybe we Southerners ought to move a little faster.

North Carolina is celebrating its 400th anniversary, and Princess Anne came to help. A local paper described the plans for her visit and announced that "In addition, a flotilla of sailing ships from Elizabeth City led by Walter Cronkite will sail into Manteo Harbor that weekend." Nearby, at New Bern, freshwater fishermen landed a 240-pound bull shark. Some thought the eight-foot-long person-eater had been lured up the Neuse River by increasing salinity; others speculated that he was fleeing Walter Cronkite.

A copy of the *Gettysburg Times* for Lee's Birthday 1984 has only now trickled in. (My subscription must have lapsed.) It reports that Mr. Jeffrey Stouffer of Sharpsburg, Maryland, was on trial in Baltimore Federal Court for receiving stolen goods in connection with the theft of an 1861 photograph of Stonewall Jackson, valued at $20,000.

In Dallas, meanwhile, the Gay and Lesbian Student Support Organization at Southern Methodist applied three times for formal recognition to the SMU student senate. Three times, the student senate said no. After the third turndown, the president of SMU was finally heard from: "Organizational recognition," he said, "is inconsistent with the goals, purpose, philosophy, and religious heritage of a Methodist university." Does that mean it's wrong?

Who'd have thought students would be the ones to uphold standards in institutions of higher education? But it's so. At Washington and Lee, the student government requested that the faculty require students to wear coats and ties to class. (C'mon guys: make it a "non-negotiable demand." Didn't you learn anything from the 60's?) And in Charlottesville, Mr. Jefferson's university, not to be outdone by W&L in the standard-upholding department, removed the Muzak from its telephone system. Formerly, callers put on hold were subjected to the ear-wash that we have grown all too accustomed to in public places —orchestral arrangements of "Penny Lane," that sort of thing. A faculty resolution prompted by embarrassment at the thought of long-distance callers being treated to a hundred violins playing "Feelings" did the trick. The assistant vice president in charge of such affairs said some people told him the music was "the most grievous problem to confront the university in 200 years."

Elsewhere in the Atlantic Coast Conference, Clemson got a new basketball coach. When Cliff Ellis left the University of South Alabama, the *Tampa Tribune*'s headline was "ELLIS TO LEAVE USA FOR CLEMSON." Another land-grant school, at the other end of the South, found a new use for cow manure. According to an article in the *Daily Texan*, while restoring an old building at Texas A&M the Aggies contrived to make new bricks look old by smearing them with the stuff, a process called (the story says) "organic patination."

As sociologists, street cops, and political bosses know, only carefully controlled lawlessness can keep a system of unworkable laws working. Federal controls on diesel fuel made even less sense in Louisiana than a 55 m.p.h. speed limit in Nevada. When they began to be rigidly enforced after some years of looking the other way, even good Americans were driven to seek Federal aid. Mr. Tee John Mialjevich of Delcambre, president of the Concerned Shrimpers of Louisiana, appeared before the House Subcommittee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries to say: "We need help, now that we can't buy hot fuel anymore." A typically out-of-touch Congressman asked him about "hot fuel": "Is that a special mixture for fishing boats?"

In other political news, 1984 North Carolina gubernatorial candidate Lauch Faircloth (he lost in the Democratic primary) said of his hometown of Clinton that it has the only McDonald's in the country that serves "McChitlins." About the same time, Fritz Hollings, whose sense of humor doesn't entirely make up for the disreputable company he keeps, suggested that Southerners aren't excited by the issues that apparently vex other Americans. When a reporter for the Yankee press asked him how his stand on a nuclear freeze would go down in Alabama, the senator allowed as how most Alabamians thought a nuclear freeze was a popsicle. And the authentic voice of the South was heard once again from Billy Carter's filling station. Eddy Rogers of the local seed and feed store told the *Wall Street Journal* that he was going to vote for Gary Hart in the primary because "he's the only candidate I never heard of until February."

Maybe Jimmy wasn't so bad after all. Free-lance smart-mouth John W. Aldridge describes the former President in a recent book as "a redneck peanut farmer from Georgia." Would that it were so. ∞

John Shelton Reed's six books on the South are known to dozens of readers.

Letter From the Fourth Internationale

by Michael Warder

The Ever-Receding Worker's Paradise

This month the Communist Party of the Soviet Union will adopt another Party program. Released as a draft in October 1985, this program constitutes a definitive statement of where

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the party is and where it is headed on its path to the worker's paradise. The Soviet Communist Party has had only three previous programs—in 1961, 1919, and 1903—so a new Party program in 1986 is a major development.

Why is there a new program now? Probably because the 1961 program is now an acute embarrassment. A remarkable example of inbred thinking by persons who have devoted their careers to a fanatic ideology, the 1961 program offered a blueprint for the perfectly communist society, and the masters of scientific socialism confidently predicted that in 1980 "a Communist society will, on the whole, be built in the USSR. The construction of Communist society will be fully completed in the subsequent period." When will that be? "The Party solemnly proclaims: the present generation of Soviet people shall live under Communism."

"The experience of the USSR and other socialist countries convincingly demonstrates the indisputable socioeconomic, political, ideological, and moral advantage of the new system as a level of man's progress superior to capitalism."
—Draft Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, October 1985

The 1961 program is full of measurable goals and timetables through the year 1980. Anyone attempting to assess how Soviet performance compares to Soviet promises ought to keep in mind an observance made by Nikita Khrushchev six years after his fall from power: "Having lived under Stalin, I tend to think that the figures for average yield which you read in the press these days reflect wishful thinking rather than reality. . . . I know some of these statistical experts. They're the sort who can melt [expletive] into bullets." Khrushchev's remark makes the stark disparity between the 1961 goals and the official record of economic performance found in authoritative Soviet and American publications appear ever bleaker.

Steel production, an economic benchmark since the days of Stalin, was estimated in 1980 at 148 million metric tons as opposed to the plan which called for 250 million tons. Electrical power output was 1,295 billion kwh as opposed to the plan of 2,850 billion kwh. Agricultural production was only 45 percent of the goal.

By 1980 rent-free apartments were to be the norm, even for newlyweds, and these apartments were to conform with the "highest standards of hygiene and culture." Even in 1985 an estimated 20 percent of Soviet urban families share their kitchens and bathrooms with nonrelated families. While comparatively inexpensive, housing is not free. The problem is that housing is unavailable. Along with free housing, the 1961 program called for free public transportation, midday meals at work, and day care for children. None of this has come to pass.

In 1961, Soviet planners were confident that by the end of the decade the Soviet Union would "surpass the strongest and richest capitalist country, the U.S.A., in production per head of population." But in 1980, per capita production in the U.S. was still twice that attained in the Soviet Union. The Japanese, Germans, French, and British were also still far ahead of the Soviets in productivity. In agriculture, the Soviet plight is worse. Twenty percent of the Soviets are farmers compared to 3.5 percent of the Americans. A Soviet farmer feeds nine people; one American farmer feeds 65 people.

Soviet authorities are hard pressed to explain (or to explain away) their failures in productivity. Since the mid-1960's, the Soviets have spent an average of 30 percent of their GNP on economic investment, whereas the U.S. has spent only 16 to 18 percent. Yet it is the Soviets who are falling behind in economic growth: from 1976 to 1983 the U.S. economy grew at an annual rate of 2.8 percent while the Soviet economy grew at a rate of only 2.6 percent.

Apologists for the Soviet Union have, understandably, grown quiet about its economic performance. We must, they say, look at *other* indices of a superior society. After all, medicine, visits to the doctor, and hospital care are all free in the Soviet Union. But these benefits prove more apparent than real: the Soviets annually spend only 34 percent of what Americans do for health. The death rate in the Soviet Union in 1964 was 6.9 deaths per 1,000 but in 1980 it was 10.3. No other country in the developed world has experienced such a trend. Fifteen years ago the average Soviet male lived 66 years; now the figure has dropped to 62 years. In the U.S. it is 71 years. In 1978, 51,000 persons died in the Soviet Union from alcoholism—100 times more than in the United States.

The Soviet infant mortality rate stands at 31 deaths per 1,000, whereas in the United States it is 12 per 1,000. Worse yet, in the Soviet Union the trend line in infant morality is going up. Why? Perhaps one reason is the high incidence of disease due to poor nutrition and lack of medical care. In 1979 there were 385,000 cases of measles compared to 14,000 in the United States. In 1979 there were 18,000 cases of typhoid, a disease virtually eliminated among American infants. A Soviet study conducted in the mid-1970's found that 34 percent of infant mortalities were linked to rickets. In 1970, there were 180 abortions for every 1,000 women in the Soviet Union; in 1982 the comparable American figure was 47. It is estimated that the average woman in the Soviet Union submits to between five and eight abortions during her life. Undoubtedly, the high incidence of abortion has affected the infant mortality rate. So much for free medicine.

Since the capitalist countries of the world, according to the Soviets, have been in decline and the Marxist countries in the ascendance, one might expect that it would be possible for them to spend a bit less on the military. The Soviets generally spend about 12-14 percent of their GNP on the military, whereas we spend 4-6 percent. There are approximately 16 full-time military personnel in the Soviet Union for every 1,000 persons. In the U.S. the figure is nine. In fact, Marxist countries, in general, have more than twice the force ratios of non-Marxist countries. The 1961 Party program informs us that with "the disappearance of class antagonisms in the fraternal family of socialist countries, national antagonisms disappear." And yet the Soviets have over 500,000 troops along the border of their socialist brother, China.

Mikhail Gorbachev's newer version of the Party program provides few goals and timetables for the most part. It

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does state that the GNP will double and grow at an annual rate of 4.7 percent until the year 2000, and productivity will increase 230-250 percent. It is unlikely that these goals will be accomplished, given that the high rates of investment during the last eight years have produced only a meager 2.6 percent growth rate. The Soviets simply lack the money to invest more, and their labor pool is dwindling.

The problem of helping young Soviets achieve computer literacy also frustrates communist planners. Experts estimate that the Soviets are from five to 20 years behind the U.S. in the implementation of computer technology. To catch up would involve more than economic and technological development, though; it would require that Party officials relax their concern with the control of information—a most unlikely development.

Even on the hard left, it is difficult to find many who still champion a Soviet regime that currently holds an estimated 10,000 people in prison for political reasons. Two thousand of these prisoners are inmates in psychiatric hospitals for the criminally insane, administered by the state security officials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Political "patients" in these prisons are surrounded by violent criminals and regularly given powerful neuroleptic drugs. For speaking out about these abuses, the Soviet psychiatrist Dr. Anatoly Koryagin was himself committed to such a hospital on charges of promulgating anti-Soviet propaganda. Exposure of Soviet perversion of psychiatric techniques forced the USSR to withdraw from the World Psychiatric Association or face certain expulsion.

In the 1960's many people supposed that by sacrificing freedom the Marxist systems could develop faster than the free-market systems of the West. Third World nations especially were attracted to Marxism as the quickest road to economic development. In fact, the Soviet Union enjoys neither freedom *nor* economic success. It is a deformed society in which a small elite perpetuates its power by an overdeveloped capacity for brutal, naked force. As a political model it is obscene. cc

Michael Warder is director of public affairs at The Rockford Institute.

On Passage Back From India

Betsy Clarke's informative and readable review of *In Search of Love and Beauty* by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala (*Chronicles*, Nov.) raised the question of how we ought to regard homosexuality. Talking of the homosexuals on parade in Jhabvala's novel, Clarke writes, "By stressing the fact that fathers were absent from the early homes of these deviants, the author even suggests a cause for their frenetic and sterile sexuality." I think "contributing factor" rather than "cause" might more accurately describe the relationship between absent father and homosexual son.

More important, though, than deciding what kind of home life is statistically most likely to foster homosexuality, we must assess the moral and religious questions posed. In a lot of our current talk about "homosexuality" there is a blurring of things that should be kept distinct.

The media-fostered craziness on the subject of "gays" and "gay rights" has got a lot of us flummoxed, but really it's our own fault for being unfaithful to tradition. Take as an example homosexuality, or what used to be called "sodomy," meaning not just a particular mode of physical connection but the whole business of same-sex fornication.

Sodomites were, the Bible says, people who, out of self-willed lust, wished to couple with several handsome young men who turned up in town. (The young men happened to be angels, but the Sodomites didn't know that, no doubt because lust tends to make you spiritually blind.)

God's judgment on these people, the Bible indicates, was that they were guilty of serious sin. He appears not to have excused them for having been born in the wrong family environment.

There *is* a "disposition" or tendency toward erotic attachment to one's own sex. This is—Old Style—a temptation. More or less vigorous, perverted sexual activity is something else. This is—Old Style—sin. A lot of forms here: masturbation, adultery, "sodomy," etc. For sodomy it is now probably best to use the euphemism "active homosexuality" (one is here mostly talking about the male side of the perversion, but it's all the same on the female side). Practitioners of this sin call it by a great many colorful names, of which "faggotry" is one of the few that is printable.

None of all this stuff is gay, in the original meaning of that word. Gay, among inverts, rose up as a shorthand way of positioning someone in "the movement." "Is he gay?" meant "Has he progressed to faggotry (overt) from homosexuality (latent)?" It is a kind of tenet of the movement that all reasonable people have plenty of the latent homosexuality.

So, you see, traditionalists (people holding to Old Style morality) would have to accord all rights to homosexuals, who are simply fellow human beings who find themselves tempted to same-sex erotic activity. But what rights does sin have? Only the old right it has always claimed: I am, therefore I am right. If you agree with the sinner that because he is tempted he *must* sin, how can you deny overt pedophilia, adultery, abortion, parricide, or anything else?

But then our age sees no *sin* anywhere, defined either as disobedience of natural or revealed law or as violation of one's own essence. We see only psychic or social inconvenience, often to be made less inconvenient by rerigging the social machinery ("gay rights," etc.).

As a journalist and inveterate reader, I deeply resent the apparently irreversible ruin of one of the happiest and best basic three-letter words in the language. cc

Tom White
Honesdale, PA

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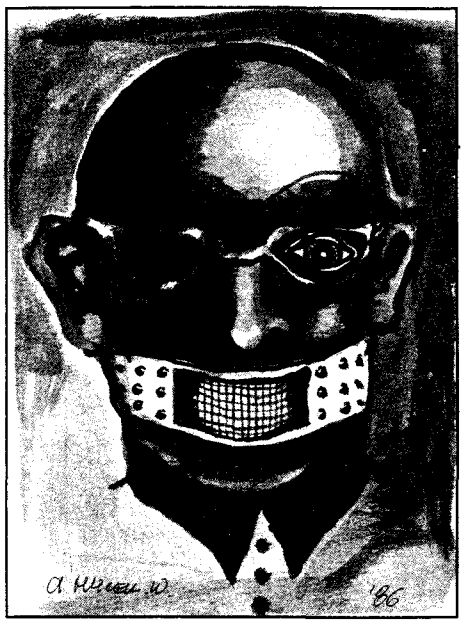
Muffled Voices

"The Noise of the City Cannot Be Heard" was the title of a very popular song in the Soviet Union just after World War II. According to Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, the song was so much in demand that "no singer, even the most mediocre, could perform it without receiving enthusiastic applause." The Soviet Chief Administration of Thoughts and Feelings was puzzled by all this, yet permitted performance of the song until "suddenly they discovered what it was all about—and they immediately crossed it off the permitted list." It seems that the songwriter had treated the theme of the "doomed prisoner" in the Gulag with a sly allusiveness quickly decoded by the



masses but initially escaping detection by the literal-minded censors. The successful honest writer in Eastern Europe resembles Leo Strauss's Maimonides: his works have one message on the surface, but here and there encoded messages are inserted to alert the cognoscenti. Today the struggle to express forbidden truths continues in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, China, and Nicaragua, as well as in many noncommunist states. Monitoring these courageous efforts are a number of magazines and newsletters deserving wider attention and influence.

Index on Censorship might well be considered the flagship of this doughty fleet of periodicals. Edited by George Theiner and published by Writers & Scholars International Ltd. (a nonprofit institution headquartered in London), every monthly issue of the *Index* exposes repression of writers, intellectuals, and believers throughout the world—in Russia and China, in Yugoslavia and Poland, in Pakistan and Taiwan. The litany of oppression —of writers imprisoned years for a single poem or short story, of trials in which the verdict is decided before the charges, of abductions and torture, of veiled threats and mysterious deaths —is unquestionably grim. On the other hand, it is not depressing: even in the worst of circumstances there are men and women who dare to affirm the supreme worth of liberty and truth, even if expressed only in crudely typed manuscripts circulated furtively among friends. In a typical issue of the *Index*, we can read a poem by the Nobel laureate Jaroslav Seifert ("In Lenin's Mausoleum") that has been banned in his native Czechoslovakia, we are privy to an anonymous report documenting the pervasive state coercion of thought in Saudi Arabia, and we can learn of the methods employed in Nigeria, Uganda, and Thailand to censor their news. If anything, the *Index* is evenhanded to a fault in its coverage of state controls on expression. Considering the record of unmitigated tyranny compiled by communism, readers may wonder about the *Index's* decision to publish interviews and articles sympathetic to the Marxist guerrillas in El Salvador in recent issues. As the dismal chain of events in Nicaragua has shown, the triumph of such guerrillas could only mean another samizdat nation.

Reports of artistic, intellectual, and religious repression may also be found in the bimonthly *Freedom at Issue* edited by James Finn. Included are appeals from Cuban political prisoners and informative accounts of forced labor in the growing Soviet nuclear industry, of the numerous abductions and deaths linked to Nicaraguan authorities, and of the harrassment and imprisonment of Christian priests and laymen in Russia. But because Freedom House, the institution that publishes *Freedom at Issue*, aims at "strengthening democratic institutions," the magazine is broader in focus than *Index on Censorship*. Articles on the health of democracy in India, on the need for civic education in America, or on the proper strategy for arms negotiators dealing with the Soviets appear alongside the reports describing the threats in various countries to free inquiry and expression. Unique to *Freedom at Issue* is an annual survey of "Freedom Around the World," in which every state is rated on seven-point scales for political and civil freedoms and then classified as "free," "partly free," or "not free." Results are tabulated in a useful comparative chart and translated into a schematic map. (The most recent survey pointed to "two of the most important trends in recent years: the erosive decline of freedom in most of Africa and the progress of freedom in the Americas.")

Freedom House also assists in the production of *Survey: A Journal of East & West Studies*, published quarterly in London in cooperation with the Institute for European Defence & Strategic Studies. Here American scholars such as Edward Rozek and Carl Gershman join with such leading European thinkers as Alain Besançon, Giuseppe Are, and editor Leopold Labedz in analyzing political and cultural issues in the West and East, with particular emphasis on the challenge of Soviet communism. Though devoted less to investigative exposure of state oppression and more to scholarly re-

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flection than either *Index on Censorship* or *Freedom at Issue*, *Survey* turns frequently to the themes of "the repression of the individual" and "the struggle . . . to create pluralist forms of social existence within a totalitarian system," especially in the USSR and Eastern Europe.

Like *Survey*, *The South Slav Journal* serves primarily as a journal of serious scholarship, drawing upon distinguished Western authorities on Yugoslavia and outstanding émigré writers from Yugoslavia, including editor Nemanja Marcetic. But besides scholarly articles, *The South Slav Journal* does regularly publish factual accounts of abuses of intellectual freedom in Yugoslavia and of protests against these abuses. A recent issue, for instance, details the detention, interrogation, and beating of Yugoslavian intellectuals legally assembled to hear an essay on Milovan Djilas.

Even more narrowly focused and nearer the cutting edge of the protest against intellectual repression are such publications as the *Bulletin* of the Democracy International Committee to Aid Democratic Dissidents in Yugoslavia (CADDY) or the *Voice of Solidarity*. Published irregularly in New York City, the CADDY *Bulletin* provides the most up-to-date information on political arrests and imprisonments, police harassment of writers and priests, and press campaigns against dissident intellectuals. Other CADDY publications provide transcripts of the farcical judicial proceedings against Yugoslav dissidents and lists of the numerous Yugoslavians imprisoned for long sentences on charges of "falsely and maliciously presenting socio-political conditions in the country" to foreign journalists or even promulgating "hostile propaganda" (in an article written for and at the request of *Kommunist!*).

Published bimonthly in London, *Voice of Solidarity* takes a more populist and labor-oriented approach to communist oppression in Poland. In its reports on the continuing fight for free associating and free expression in Poland, the *Voice* documents the brutal police measures the government covertly employs. "Special police squads . . . inflict selective terror," beating up 10-year-olds who flash the V-for-victory sign and murdering those recalcitrant adults who will not learn from beatings: "The technique is always the same. The victim is first beaten up and then . . . thrown out of a high window, so that the new injuries cover up the earlier ones. The inquest is conducted in a perfunctory manner, and the victim's family is intimidated by vague threats." *Voice of Solidarity* also offers a rare look at how the war in Afghanistan is fueling dissent, especially in the predominantly Moslem regions in southern USSR. The *Voice* reports an epidemic of infectious hepatitis in the western Ukraine caused because young conscripts "drank the urine of those having hepatitis and thus landed in the hospital" rather than being sent to Afghanistan. Such things make it into American newspapers only infrequently. Indeed, anyone reading *Index on Censorship*, *Freedom at Issue*, the CADDY *Bulletin*, or *Voice of Solidarity* may wonder why the American media—source of exhaustive information of the latest unrest in El Salvador or the Philippines—provides such spotty coverage of the tyrannous acts of communist regimes.

But censorship in America is almost never a matter of government decree.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Weeping in Ramah by J.R. Lucas; Crossway; Westchester, IL; $7.95. A novelistic look at the horrific world of legalized infanticide and fetal experimentation that the abortion mentality could create.

Breaking Faith: The Sandinista Revolution and Its Impact on Freedom and Christian Faith in Nicaragua by Humberto Belli; Crossway/Puebla; Westchester, IL; $8.95. A former member of the Sandinista movement traces Nicaragua's continuing evolution into a totalitarian regime and explains why the Sandinista agenda has been—from the very first—antithetical to democratic liberty and to Christian faith. Recommended reading for Dr. Spock, Ed Asner, and Jim Wallis.

Recent Philosophers by John Passmore; Open Court; La Salle, IL; $24.95. Surveying the world of philosophy during the last 20 years, a distinguished Australian philosopher concludes that "for all the greater sophistication of method . . . it is surprising how much philosophical effort is still devoted to trying to solve problems which Plato, or Descartes, or Hume, first saw as such." Given their contorted prose and their insistence on relegating religion to "marginal areas" of the discipline, the course of modern philosophy seems one of involution, not progress.

The Modern Researcher by Jacques Barzun and Henry F. Graff; 4th edition; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; San Diego; $24.95. An expanded version of the standard research manual used for 30 years by scholars, writers, and editors, updated to help readers make effective use of the word processor, computer, and other new research tools. More than a guide to accepted and fruitful research practices, *The Modern Researcher* combines sophisticated analyses of the competing philosophies of historical verification with specific suggestions for achieving clarity and grace in style.

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It is, instead, a gentleman's agreement on what is fit to print, review, and discuss. The agreement is not exclusively political, since it applies even to exclusively aesthetic questions, but if anything, it is even more effective. While the Soviet Union and her "allies" have produced a host of martyrs and witnesses to the truth—Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn in the USSR, Mihajlo Mihajlov in Yugoslavia, Milan Kundera in Czechoslovakia—in America we are too gentlemanly (or too well schooled) to point the finger. Here, in a sense, it is the writers who are the censors, and that has made all the difference.

The publications here under review are not always available at bookstores and libraries (without the help of Momcilo Selic, an émigré writer from Yugoslavia and a *Chronicles* contributor, we could not have located them all). So we here provide mailing addresses for these invaluable periodicals:

Index on Censorship, 39c Highbury Place, London N5 1QP, UK ($25/year);

Freedom at Issue, 20 West 40th Street, New York, NY 10018 ($10/year);

Survey, Ilford House, 133 Oxford Street, London W1R 1TD, UK; available in the U.S. through Expediters of the Printed Word Ltd., 527 Madison Avenue, Suite 1217, New York, NY 10022 ($39/year);

The South Slav Journal, 7 Chesterford Gardens, London NW3 7DD, UK;

CADDY *Bulletin*, Room 911, 36 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036;

Voice of Solidarity, 215 Balham High Road, London SW17 7BN, UK; available in the U.S. through the Study Group Network for Political Economy, P.O. Box 891, Buffalo, NY 14240 ($20/year);

Organizations which occasionally publish information on intellectual and artistic repression also include:

International PEN, Writers in Prison Committee, 38 King Street, London WC2E 8JT, UK;

Amnesty International, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 8DJ; UK;

PEN, American Section, Freedom to Write Committee, 568 Broadway, New York, NY 10012. cc

Cultural Revolutions

(continued from p. 7)

only 15 percent of IHSA membership, yet they have won 35 percent of the state football titles and over half of the state volleyball crowns. One Catholic high school principal, whose school took the state basketball title in 1985, cut through the cant about "philosophical differences": "I think a few principals at public schools are jealous of the success the private schools have had and want to reserve the championship play for themselves." A public school principal in the Interstate Eight Conference confessed to the *Chicago Tribune*, "If they [the private schools] lost all the time, there probably wouldn't be any resolution." The public schools' plan for creating "champions" looks suspiciously like their method for producing "graduates"—eliminate the tough tests. Besides, given the anarchy now found in many of Illinois' public schools, principals are probably fearful that when playing against private schools, members of their teams will slip away to the opposing locker room and ask for political asylum. cc

What's Up, Doc?

A survey of medical specialties recently circulated among physicians in Columbus, Ohio. We reprint it in full:

The following is a list of "special procedures" the public requests. Please mark any that would be appropriate to your practice.

1. ___ Acupuncture
   ___ Smoking Cessation ___ Weight Loss ___ Pain Reduction
2. ___ Abortions
3. ___ AIDS
4. ___ Alcoholism Treatment
5. ___ Biofeedback
6. ___ Drug Abuse
   ___ Medical ___ Psychological
7. ___ Flight Physicians
8. ___ Gay Medical Problems
9. ___ Geriatric Medicine
10. ___ Herpes
11. ___ Holistic Medicine
12. ___ Housecalls
    ___ New Patient ___ Established Patient
    Region _____
13. ___ Infertility Workups:
    *Sperm banks _____
    *Test tube babies (In Vitro) _____
    *Sterilization Reversals
    ___ Male ___ Female
    *Surrogate mothers _____
14. ___ Laser Therapy
15. ___ Ophthalmic Refraction
16. ___ Sex Changes
    ___ Male to female ___ Female to male
17. ___ Sex Therapy
    ___ Psychological ___ Male ___ Female
    ___ Physical ___ Male ___ Female
18. ___ Weight Loss Specialists/Nutritional Counseling
19. OTHER _____

Other? You can't get much *other* than this. Columbus is hardly typical of Ohio, though it's the state capital. You know politicians: boys will be boys—and girls, too, apparently.

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